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THE LIFE OF LEXANDER SEVERUS

R. V. NIND HOPKINS

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ALEXANDER SEVERUS

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THE LIFE

OF

ALEXANDER SEVERUS

by

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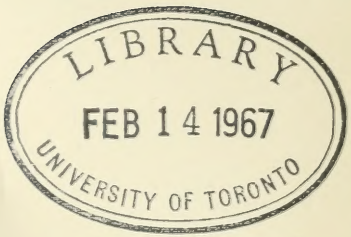

TO

P. A. H.

PREFACE.

THE records of the reign of Alexander Severus[1] contained in the extant works of ancient historians are essentially insufficient, and information on many of the questions of his history has to be sought from other sources. Circumstances have conspired in several ways to obscure the Emperor's history. With one exception contemporary writers possessed little insight or ability, and Dio,—the exception,—practically closed his narrative with the death of Elagabalus. Later writers, also with one exception, were mere compilers, and though Ammianus Marcellinus,—the exception,—began his history of Rome with Nerva, the early books epitomising the history of the first two hundred and fifty seven years are lost. The loss of Ammianus is not indeed so regrettable as would appear, for while the books which are preserved embody a full and reliable history of his own times[2], the thirteen lost books were rather in the nature of a superficial résumé, and their value would

[1] Be it said once and for all that "Severus Alexander" is historically a more correct name than "Alexander Severus": *v.* Appendix III. *ad fin.* In this Essay however I have not thought it desirable to discard the accepted modern order. For the most part I have designated the Emperor simply "Alexander."

[2] He was born in 330 A.D., and his history ends with the year 378 A.D.

inevitably be diminished by the paucity of materials he had at his command.

Dio[1] was the best historian of the third century. His supremacy has indeed been disputed, and Marius Maximus has been claimed as his superior, but the most recent opinion is almost unanimous in admitting Dio's pre-eminence. A man at once of literary ability and of historical insight, Dio wrote a history of Rome of which the latter portions are now invaluable. Though his philosophy is often sententious and commonplace, his impartiality occasionally questionable, his credulity not infrequently evident, his writings on the whole are exact, his judgments fair, and his historical perspective is remarkably accurate, while his work embodies a vast store of information on the constitutional working of the Principate. His rank, his administrative positions, and the general confidence which he enjoyed, enabled him to gain an unrivalled knowledge alike of the constitution and of the secrets of government in his day. Born at Nicaea in 155, he devoted his early years to those literary studies which were to engage him throughout his life. Coming to Rome in 180 he was quickly admitted to the Senate, and later honoured under Commodus with the offices of quaestor and aedile. He was appointed praetor in 193 by Pertinax, and entered on that office in the following year, after the accession of Septimius. It is clear that at first Dio enjoyed the esteem and confidence of the latter Emperor[2], but he was entrusted with no further magistracy during the reign. Friction arose from some cause, and for many years,—till the death of Caracalla,—Dio's political career was confined to attendance in the Senate. That however sufficed to keep him

[1] The full name is Cassius Dio Cocceianus.

[2] Dio, LXXII. 23.

in touch with the politics of his time, and in 218 he was restored to office by Macrinus[1], who appointed him curator of Smyrna and Pergamum. But it was Alexander who above all recognised the abilities of Dio; in the early years of Alexander's reign he was twice consul, proconsul of Africa, and governor of Dalmatia and Pannonia Superior[2]. Unfortunately however the great confidence which Alexander reposed in his minister led to his fall. Dio in administrative spheres was essentially a disciplinarian, and without doubt sympathised with Alexander's schemes for military reform. In Pannonia he exercised towards the troops a severity which on his return led to a protest from the praetorians, a protest so insistent that the Emperor, though he attempted to override it by appointing Dio to the consulship, was compelled before long to give way. The consulship of 229 was spent in retirement in Italy, whence the historian soon left for his home in Bithynia, never to return.

Dio was thus taken out of the sphere of politics before Alexander's reign had run half its course, before his schemes had had time to ripen; and as a result the great historian breaks off his detailed narrative with the death of Elagabalus, and leaves but a short and incomplete abstract of the six following years. For us that abstract is rendered all the more inadequate by the fact that the later books[3] of Dio's history are for the most part lost, and known to us only through the abridgement made in the eleventh century by Xiphilinus of Trebizond, and through such fragments of the original as still survive. None the less in the existing state of the authorities, the thousand words of Dio which remain for Alexander's

[1] Dio, LXXIX. 7.

[2] *Ib.* LXIX. 36, LXXVI. 16, LXXX. 1–5.

[3] Except books LXXVIII. and LXXIX. of which a mutilated MS. is extant.

reign are of the highest value. So much as he narrates of Ulpian's prefecture, of the temper of the army, of the condition of the East and the inception of the Persian peril is reliable history. It is all the more tantalising that his silence should commence in a reign as remarkable as it is ill-recorded. Dio, like many historians from Thucydides onwards, had a continuator, but his worth was small and only fragments of his work remain[1].

The history of Marius Maximus terminated with the death of Elagabalus. Though four inscriptions of Marius Maximus the consul of Alexander's reign[2] are ascribed by the editor of the *Corpus Inscriptionum* to the historian without further comment[3], the facts of the latter's life are very imperfectly known. His writings, themselves lost, are largely embodied in the Augustan Histories, the compilers of which usually followed him in preference to their other authorities. Marius has often been overestimated, and in reality the chief value of his records lies in their date and in their author's minute knowledge of the court. He took up the history of Suetonius and continued it in a style similar, though inferior, to that of his model. "Popular" and "scandal-mongering" are epithets which adequately describe his methods[4]. For the student of Alexander it is without doubt a loss that Marius should have terminated his history at the point at which Dio's narrative virtually ends; yet it is probable that he would have thrown little light on a reign, the true

[1] *v.* Anonymi qui Dionis Cassii historias continuavit fragmenta. Müll. *Fragm. Hist. Graec.* IV. 191–4. He was probably identical with Petrus Patricius, who lived in the sixth century under Justinian. Gibbon, ed. Bury, II. p. 531.

[2] *C. I. L.* VI. 1450–3.

[3] "Mari Maximi scriptoris historiarum qui in vitis Augustorum saepe memoratur."

[4] Gibbon, ed. Bury, vol. II. App.

significance of which he can only have imperfectly understood.

The other contemporary,—or nearly contemporary,—historian whose work survives, is Herodian, and though he has left a fairly copious record of the reign, it is not reliable and is chiefly concerned with the single episode of the Persian War. The facts of Herodian's life are not at all certain, but it is probable that he was born in 170, came to Rome at the beginning of the third century, and subsequently held some minor administrative posts; it is not clear whether he was a Senator[1]. Herodian stands on a different plane from Dio; he possessed only in a small degree the necessary qualifications of an historian; for the most part he narrates salient features of court life and foreign politics with only a restricted conception of their bearing and with even less regard for chronology. His history of Alexander is chiefly of value for the narrative of the campaign in Persia, and even that has been called in question. There was an idea prevalent in antiquity that Herodian was prejudiced against Alexander; Capitolinus[2] in particular speaks of "Herodian, the Greek writer who, to bring odium on Alexander, greatly favoured Maximin." That judgement has been emphasised especially by those historians who uphold Lampridius' account of the Persian War, in which a great victory is ascribed to the Roman arms[3], while the less favourable account of Herodian is mentioned only to be rejected[4]. But a more impartial investigation tends to the

[1] Gibbon, ed. Bury, vol. I. App. 1. Ceuleneer, *Vie de Septime Sévère*, pp. 3, 4. Kreutzer, *De Herodiano Rerum Romanarum Scriptore*, 1881.

[2] *Max.* XIII. Maximin was Alexander's successor.

[3] Such as Krebs, *De Severi Alexandri bello contra Persas gesto*, 1847, p. 10.

[4] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVII. 3.

conclusion that Herodian was on the whole fair to Alexander[1], while his account of the Persian War is far more reliable than that of any other ancient historian[2]. It is chiefly in chronology that Herodian fails, and in that respect it is possible that the errors in the present text are due to the ignorant emendations or careless transcripts of medieval scholars. The inadequacies of Herodian's history are in reality due in the first place to his authorities, for it seems clear that even in narrating the history of his own day he had recourse to contemporary authors. For Alexander he used in particular two accounts of the reign, each emanating from the party opposed to the Imperial policy. In the one account it would seem that Alexander was described as subservient to a base mother, in the other as personally responsible for an evil administration. From time to time the two sources are used side by side and produce repetitions and inconsistencies in the history[3].

The list of historians is by no means exhausted. The longest history of Alexander is that embodied in the Augustan Histories, a compilation which has been the subject of much learned discussion, especially in Germany[4]. The life of Alexander in that heterogeneous and unenlightened series comes from the pen of Lampridius, by no means the most capable of the contributors, a writer who exhibits in a striking degree the want of method and order, the repetitions and contradictions, the absence of insight and love of petty detail which characterise the whole work. It is perhaps unfair to regard the compilations as history; probably they were not intended to be

[1] Cf. Wahle, *De Imp. Alex. Sev.* p. 33.
[2] See, for example, p. 237 *infra*.
[3] Cf. Porrath, *Der Kaiser Alex. Sev.* p. 2.
[4] *v.* esp. Mommsen, *Scrip. Hist. Aug.* in *Hermes* 1890, pp. 270 sqq.

much more than a series of scandal-loving biographies, filled with personal details of the monarchs of whom they treat; in the result they are for the most part an inartistic *farrago* of unordered trivialities. Late in date (Lampridius dedicates his work to Constantine), they have no individual significance and when they touch upon matters of historical interest, their borrowed value is dependent upon the source from which they are drawn. Lampridius not infrequently mentions his authority and occasionally even criticises the views of old historians with whom he disagrees[1]. His primary source[2] for the life of Alexander was the continuator of Marius Maximus[3], a writer who closely imitated the style of his model[4]. Herodian and Dexippus were also drawn upon, as well as Acholius, Valerian's master of the ceremonies, who wrote an essay on the journeys of Alexander Severus, Gargilius[5], whose acknowledged contributions to the life of Alexander are valueless, perhaps a certain Aurelius Philippus[6], probably also the recorded speeches of Alexander. Material was further derived from a few other historians of somewhat higher merit and of wider scope, whom several of the compilers used[7]. The biography of Lampridius is fundamentally unsatisfactory; its masses of undigested personal detail are lifeless and

[1] As Herodian in LVII. 3, cited above.

[2] For the following statements cf. the article of Mommsen cited above.

[3] It seems clear that the history of Marius ended with Elagabalus, although Lampridius mentions Marius in his history of Alexander.

[4] The citation in chapters VI. sq. "ex actis urbis" is presumably taken from the continuator, who followed Marius' system of introducing official documents (not always authentic) into his text.

[5] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXXVII. 5.

[6] *Ib.* III. 2.

[7] Teuffel, ed. 2, § 387; A. Krause, *De fontibus Script. Hist. Aug.* 1857.

often unimportant, while his information on the vital questions of the history is only too often wrong.

Zosimus and Zonaras are late compilers of whom the former is occasionally valuable. The latter on losing Dio chiefly follows his continuator. The two works passing under the name of Aurelius Victor, and the *Breviarium* of Eutropius, add little to our knowledge. The work of Eutropius, dating about 375 A.D., was favourably received and has some claims to consideration, but his account of Alexander is limited to sixty words. The account in the Epitome is a model of historical reserve; one-fifth of that biography is devoted to the record of this fact; "huius mater Mammaea eo filium coegerat, ut illa ipsa permodica, si mensae prandioque superessent, quamvis convivio, reponerentur." Information worthy of Gargilius himself! Further literary authorities are Suidas, Orosius, Cassiodorus, Sextus Rufus, Eusebius, and the fragments of Petrus Patricius, Johannes of Antioch, and Jordanis, while Christian writers,—Cyprian, Origen, Lactantius, Tertullian,—from their extraneous point of view, are of some service for other questions in addition to those of Church History.

Dio is the one reliable literary source. Herodian can only be accepted with caution, and when in conflict with Dio must as a rule give way to him. The remaining authors are inferior in weight to these, but they are in no way negligible. Though compiled at a late date, a considerable portion of their information came through fairly trustworthy channels. Their statements must be accepted, sometimes with reserve, unless they can be shown to be irrational or contrary to fact. And indeed, though the sum total of the recorded history as it stands is meagre, investigation of the various isolated records in the light of the known history of the movements and

tendencies of the time, provides the key to much that is at first sight hidden. In Lampridius in particular, short allusions casually let fall in the midst of a shower of nugatory details, often indicate important features of policy, the true significance of which was unknown to the compiler.

Out of the literary records alone a great deal of the history of Alexander's reign could be recovered, but fortunately historical sources of information do not stand by themselves. The history of the Empire is illumined in many other ways. The *Codex* and the *Digest* embody stores of knowledge for every period, and for none more than the culminating period of jurisprudence in Rome, from the Antonines to Alexander. Of still greater importance are the coins and inscriptions, of which the evidence is continually growing in value as in bulk. It is hardly too much to say that the collections of inscriptions contain the key to the constitutional, and in a degree to the political, history of the Empire. In such a reign as that of Septimius, a reign of action, the inscriptions are particularly numerous and often of the highest significance. Alexander, a man of peace, more concerned for the welfare of the state than for military glory, is less often mentioned upon stone, yet in his reign too inscriptions from all parts throw light upon the history; in particular the East, at the moment the centre of war, the centre of administrative activity, a principal object of the Imperial affection, and to a remarkable extent the nurse of genius, contributes its fund of inscriptions to confute or confirm. I have had recourse again and again to the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, and the following pages contain many references to its contents. The *Ephemeris Epigraphica*, the collections of Boeckh, Renier, Waddington, Orelli-Henzen, &c. are frequently of service. The

coins are numerous and varied, a considerable collection being available in the British Museum. The works of Eckhel and Cohen have been continually used. But for the most part the evidence of coins is coloured by their origin; they constitute records of events seen through Imperial spectacles.

The modern works of political and constitutional history of which I have made most use are the following:—

Mommsen and Marquardt. *Handbuch der römischen Alterthümer*[1].

Schiller. *Geschichte der römischen Kaiserzeit.*

Duruy. *History of Rome and the Roman People.* (*English edition*); his account of Alexander is however often unreliable.

Friedländer's *Darstellungen aus der Sittengeschichte Roms in der Zeit von Augustus bis zum Ausgang der Antonine*[1] may also be mentioned[2].

A monograph by A. de Ceuleneer, *Essai sur la Vie et le Règne de Septime Sévère* (Liège, 1874), has been of considerable service in tracing the development from Septimius to Alexander. Among the other works used in various connections the chief are the following:—

Arnold. *Roman Provincial Administration.*
Bury. *Student's Roman Empire.*
Clinton. *Fasti Romani.*
Gibbon. *Decline and Fall.* (Ed. Bury.)
Lanciani. *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, &c.
Mommsen. *Scriptores Historiae Augustae.* (Hermes, 1890.)
Mommsen. *The Roman Currency.* (French Edition.)
Mommsen. *The Roman Provinces.* (English Edition.)
Pauly and Wissowa. *Real-Encyclopädie*, *s.v.* Aurelius.

[1] These works, for greater facility of reading, I have read in the French translations, and the references in the notes are to those editions.

[2] Dill's *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius* appeared only when this Essay was under revision.

Rubensohn. *Die Chronologie des Alexander Severus und ihrer litterarischen Ueberlieferung.* (Hermes, 1890[1].)

Taylor. *Constitutional and Political History of Rome.*

After this essay had reached nearly its present form, the following German theses relating to the reign of Alexander came into my hands:—

De Imperatore M. Aur. Severo Alexandro, by Eugenius Muche (1868, 36 pages).

De Imperatore Alexandro Severo Quaestiones Historicae, by F. J. Wahle (1867, 61 pages).

Der Kaiser Alexander Severus, by Otto Porrath (1876, 60 pages).

Forschungen über den romischen Kaiser M. Aur. Severus Alexander, by Muche. Schweidnitz, 1873.

Each of these first three is a *Dissertatio Inauguralis*. Their size and scope is unpretentious and their value small, and the few places in which they have been of use are recorded in the notes. The essay of Muche contains some passages of insight but is chiefly a transcript from the old historians. That of Wahle contains a somewhat detached series of discussions of salient points in the reign, in which an unsatisfactory treatment of chronology occupies a disproportionately large amount of space. Porrath's thesis is referred to among the authorities for the reign in the *Encyclopädie* of Pauly and Wissowa, but it fails to carry the student very far. The essay appears from the "Life" added at the conclusion to have been written at the age of 25, and the author has made some study of Cohen and Eckhel in addition to the old historians. He seems however to have been ignorant of the importance of inscriptions; at any rate he preserves an almost unbroken silence about them and naïvely remarks,

[1] A *Nota Chronologica* by E. Callegari entitled *Quando abbia cominciati a regnare Alexandro Severo* (1876), has not come into my hands: in view of its date it is not likely to be of any great value.

—"Über Alexanders Einrichtungen and Verordnungen im Innern des Staates sind wir sehr mangelhaft unterrichtet. Unsere ganze Kenntniss davon beruht allein fast auf Lampridius" (p. 36). The treatment of Alexander's administration is inadequate and is limited almost entirely to a judicious rearrangement of the inaccuracies of Lampridius; on the more difficult problems of the reign, such as the constitution of the Senatorial Cabinet and the reorganisation of the frontier administration, the author has but little to say. It is curious also that with Mommsen-Marquardt ready to his hand, he makes only two references to the work. He gives however an intelligible account of Alexander's character, of his struggle with the army, and of the Persian War, and is responsible for a certain number of ingenious suggestions.

The later work of Muche (*Forschungen, &c.*) is confined to the period ending with Alexander's succession in 222, but for that period it contains a good deal of valuable commentary, and I have made several references to it in the early chapters of this Essay.

Respecting the first volume of Gibbon's History, Mr Cotter Morison writes,—"No doubt the subject-matter was comparatively meagre and ungrateful. The century between Commodus and Diocletian was one long spasm of anarchy and violence, which was, as Niebuhr said, incapable of historical treatment. The obscure confusion of the age is aggravated into almost complete darkness by the wretched materials which alone have survived, and the attempt to found a dignified narrative on such scanty and imperfect authorities was scarcely wise[1]." In a sense that is true. The anarchy and violence of the century was not indeed unbroken, but the intervals of comparative

[1] Cotter Morison, *Gibbon* ("English Men of Letters," 1878), p. 116.

tranquillity, such as that in Alexander's reign, were short and fleeting. Further those sources of authority on which the historian of most periods of civilised history mainly relies are conspicuously few and unreliable for the third century. But on the other hand if the old chronicles fail, the great mass of the *Corpus Inscriptionum*, containing thousands of third century inscriptions, even by itself stands to dispute the idea that the century is incapable of historical treatment, while the work of Mommsen-Marquardt proves the vast possibilities of that ocean of authority. As regards the reign of Alexander in particular, the records, if they are inadequate and spasmodic, are at least sufficient to show that his character and life are well worth reconstruction, if reconstruction is in any way attainable. Alone among monarchs of the day he stands as an example of earnest faith and earnest virtue. But the attempt to present a satisfactory picture is continually baffled on the one side by the paucity, on the other by the multiplicity, of materials. A history of Alexander written in bold outline, based on generalities, and negligent of minor records, would assuredly be flimsy and insufficient. Yet on the other hand, while it is clear that a minute study of numerous coins referring to restorations of buildings will elicit some information regarding the Public Works, or of numerous inscriptions relating to the maintenance of roads will elicit further facts as to the attitude of the government towards the important question of the military and commercial intercommunication of the Empire,—it is evident that any sufficient treatment of such minutiae continually threatens to break the thread of an ordered narrative. A recent article in "The Spectator" advances psychology as "the remedy for the obsession both by inessential detail and by generalities which is the vice of certain schools to-day, for

it insists that facts without principles are dead, and that principles without facts are empty[1]." In attempting a history of Alexander's reign I have endeavoured to focus the heterogeneous materials, but the difficulty of so using them that there might emerge the picture of a man and some living semblance of the attributes of his age has often seemed well-nigh insuperable.

An apology is perhaps due for the frequent use in the following pages of such words as "throne," "monarch," "court," "subjects," and other terms properly applicable to a recognised monarchy. The figment of a Dyarchy so thinly veiled pure monarchy that such words come naturally from the pen.

The work of leisure hours carried out with restricted facilities for continuous research, this essay must, I am well aware, contain many and great defects, but for me at least it has served to awaken a lively interest in the fortunes of a noble and magnanimous man to whom fate denied what he needed most,—a quiet anchorage. I have continually been reminded of the words of Coleridge:— "subjects on which I should find it difficult not to say too much, though certain after all that I should leave the better part unsaid, and the gleaning for others richer than my harvest."

I wish to express my obligation to the adjudicators to the Prince Consort Prize for the sanction given by them to some modifications and omissions made in this Essay since the date of their award. I am also deeply grateful to Mr P. Giles and Mr F. H. Marshall, Fellows of Emmanuel College, and also to my old college friend, Dr G. W. Craig, for their generous assistance and advice in the work of revision for the press.

[1] "The Spectator," No. 3993, January 7, 1905, p. 10.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE glory of Imperial Rome is tinged with a shade of melancholy. The change from the Republic to the Empire was no change of government alone; it was an alteration in character. The city had been a city of aspiration and self-sacrifice, the habitation of a single people whose power was in its sword. But that spirit had fled before the age of demagogues and civil war. In its place the first century saw only the luxury of a lavish aristocracy, the indolence of a state-fed populace, the indifference of a community without reverence and with little morality, the brilliant exterior of an Imperial metropolis with its swarming parasites, the flotsam and the jetsam of the world. And ever in the background looms the shadow of the barbarian invasions, as yet unforeseen, soon to swoop down and turn decadence into subjection. "God soweth guilt among mortals when He wills utterly to ruin a house."

The establishment of the Empire had been followed by the fall of the old families. The Sullan and Marian proscriptions had in themselves sufficed to work havoc in the nobility: the persecutions of the Second Triumvirate, of Claudius, of Caligula, of Nero, of Domitian, finished

the work so relentlessly begun. In the place of the old families rose an upstart order,—Quirites by adoption,—to whom the Emperor was the fountain of life and fortune. This and the degeneration of the populace had sealed the doom of the Republic. The establishment of the Principate was no arbitrary act of a tyrant relying for an instant on military ascendancy; monarchy was the natural outcome of Roman history. The state accepted that form of government as soon as it lost the capacity for governing itself, as soon, that is, as it ceased to be a soldier-state, for at all times in Rome the soldier was king,—first the soldier as the people, then the soldier as the Emperor, finally, as in the days of Alexander Severus, the soldier in the camp of the praetorians and as the legionary before the gates of Rome[1]. In the last arbitrament the government rested openly or secretly on the power of the sword.

But Rome's loss was yet Rome's gain. Regulus would have chosen his "Lacedaemonium Tarentum" in preference to all the luxury of an Imperial palace, but would a later Roman willingly have sacrificed his pomp and power for the Cana Fides of the Rome that was no more? In the Republic, the city was the national home and the national fortress built to withstand the onset of the world. In the Empire Rome was the world-metropolis, the imperial city sitting at the receipt of custom, exacting the homage and the tribute of subject nations, the heart of the greatest world-state that mankind had yet seen. Clearly, attaching to each position there was a peculiar grandeur; the grandeur of strenuous power giving way to that of toilless domination, the pride of war giving way to the fruits of victory.

Thus the decadence of Roman society may easily be

[1] After Septimius.

exaggerated. The work of conquest was done: it remained to rest and enjoy the fruits of victory. Before Sulla the safety of the state depended on the vigour and self-sacrifice of its citizens. After Augustus ease and serenity were substituted for a succession of national dangers. At the centre of an Empire thus consolidated there was room for luxury, even for indolence.

Nevertheless indolence and luxury had sunk deep and sapped the vitals of society. The semblance of liberty was gone, and over all hung the military peril. The popular assemblies had passed away: the Senate (*Stat magni nominis umbra!*) met in all its old solemnity to serenade its Emperor with senile acclamations. Literature and art had lost their vigour. The city had snapped one by one the chief links which united it with the past. In fact the city was hastening to ruin. Although the spirit of wild and reckless extravagance which characterised the early Imperial period up to the time of Nero was followed by a reaction,—a temporary period of general prosperity[1],—yet in the event the state could not measure or stay its course. Caesarism developed into militarism, and in the end the army became a rabble. The desire for wealth did not abate as the means of wealth diminished. The treasury which once was easily filled was yet to drain the resources of the taxpayer in ineffectual striving for replenishment. As many of the enactments of Alexander will show, the practice of retrenchment and the power of adapting ends to means were gone. Judged by results,—and the test is a fair one,—the path which it was treading lay downwards through decay.

Chief among the changes in this epoch was the change in the spirit and thought of Rome. And this change is

[1] The period ended with Antoninus Pius.

one which illustrates to a remarkable degree the dual aspect, as it were, of the history of the Empire. Just as the political and social history embodies at once aspects of prosperity and aspects of decay, so religion and philosophy take to themselves a new vigour which yet, if it be carefully investigated, is found to be the precursor of the end. The old Roman religion towards the end of the Republic had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. It lacked those characteristics of imaginative beauty and emotional truth which make the successful appeal to the heart of man. Its gods were mere plagiarisms or abstractions; its worship a business transaction between man and deity, a service offered for an immediate and practical return.

The Empire marked the period of gradual restoration. The old religion, which for a time was kept alive only in the ignorant but faithful breasts of the country peasantry, by slow and painful efforts regained its early vigour and began to pass into a devotional form and to provide the note of consolation and encouragement which had been lacking in the morning of the race.

The secret of the restoration lies in the conservatism of the Roman race. When the storm of revolution and reaction swept over the face of Rome, the faith of the Italian peasants, who saw the hand of God in all the phenomena of nature and the dispensation of providence in all the fluctuations of material prosperity, remained untouched by the philosophic doubts which afflicted the rich, and the worldly indifference which cast its shadow upon the proletariat at Rome. The atheism of the Ciceronian age was in part the result of political upheaval, and when the establishment of the Empire had inaugurated an age of peace and furnished opportunities of intercourse previously unknown throughout the length

and breadth of the Roman world, the dormant spirit was able to reassert itself and to burst into new and vigorous life. The strength and universality of this second outburst are witnessed from the days of Marcus Aurelius to the reign of Alexander and beyond by the unfailing evidence of inscriptions; in every country, upon grave-stones, upon votive offerings, and in imperial eulogies alike, the gods are continually invoked, now in thanksgiving, now in prayer, and not a voice is raised to question. The strength of faith is evidenced too by the productivity of religion and by the long and equal contest which it waged with Christianity; for centuries new deities were continually added to the celestial assemblage, and even in the end, when Christianity overcame paganism by the sheer weight of gathering numbers, the pagan deities still survived in the imagination as powers of darkness, angels fallen from their heritage and now bent upon the ruin of wayward man.

The most striking feature of the religious revival was its power of assimilation. The worship of the ancient gods with its political associations and its state-appointed priests needed supplementing, now that Rome had become the meeting place of the nations. And so Isis, Osiris, Serapis, Cybele, Astarte, Mithra, are all imported, bringing with them a priestcraft, a thing hitherto unknown. Their extravagant devotions and noisy and theatrical ceremonials seized on the popular imagination, while their incantations and expiatory sacrifices satisfied the growing taste for the mysterious and the sensational. The presence of the foreign deities has often been regarded as a sign of the decay of belief, but such a conclusion is not in reality justified. Isis and Osiris, standing side by side with Jupiter, never threatened the supremacy of the Latin gods. Ancient races did not claim to have attained to

ultimate truth in their religions and were ever ready to acknowledge creeds of another country as equally valid with their own. At the same time however the assimilation of Egyptian and Oriental religions necessarily left its influence upon the revived Roman polytheism. There was a mystic element in the majority of the Eastern cults which at first was foreign to the gods of Rome. In particular in the days of Alexander the worship of the Persian Sun-god Mithra, with its devotional ceremonial, its impressive mysteries, and its call for the equality of men, was bidding for the religious supremacy of the whole Empire. Oriental worships with their large and influential following introduced an alien note into religion, and while they helped to hide the moral barrenness of the Latin ceremonial, they also introduced into the Roman polytheism a new piety which as the centuries ran their course became continually more devotional, continually less like the pristine Latin faith.

The same tendency is visible in philosophy. For generations Stoicism had been the creed which succeeded to some extent in filling the void caused by the want of an ethical religion.

But the zenith was also the beginning of a decline. The old Stoicism contained all that was the antithesis of mysticism: it was self-centred and self-absorbed, but never morbidly introspective: it was fearless and regardless of the value of human life: it preached contempt of earthly ills: it sanctioned self-slaughter as a εὔλογος ἀπαγωγή in the face of grief. But in the second century there crept into Stoicism a devotional element. Marcus Aurelius, endowed with many of the virtues of the Christians whom he persecuted, differing from them in dogma rather than in moral view, to the old Stoic ἀπέχου καὶ ἐνέχου added the new motto *Adiuva*. For the old

fearlessness, he was among the first to substitute a tendency to self-despair, combined with the great principle of subjective religion so common among the later philosophers, the certitude of meeting God within the soul. Compassion and self-despair and internal communion with God: that was not the philosophy of Cato.

With Aurelius therefore Stoicism begins the transformation into Neoplatonism, the same change from reality to mysticism which was taking place in the common thought of Rome. The spirit of dissatisfaction leads to the self-elimination of Plotinus. To some extent the change is the natural outcome of the deficiencies of the Stoic system. "The failure of Stoicism to work out successfully its idea that there is an immanent principle of unity under all the differences of things and of our knowledge of them, leads subsequent philosophy to conceive God as essentially transcendent. But in this way it becomes impossible to suppose that there is any rational connexion between him and the world, or any rational apprehension of him by the human mind. If under such a view there is to be any relation established between God and man, the activity that produces it must be entirely on God's side, and on man's side there can only be passivity. And if human consciousness of God remains possible, it must be in an ecstatic condition in which man is rapt beyond himself so that all self-consciousness is absorbed and lost. Hence we have an apparently paradoxical result, the rise of a philosophy which might from one point of view be called Agnosticism, and which yet does not mean disbelief or doubt, but rather the profoundest certainty of the reality of the Absolute Being, whom man's thoughts cannot measure or his words express[1]."

[1] Caird, *The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers*, Vol. II. p. 179.

Dr Caird, in the spirit of the Hegelian school, sees in this "failure of Stoicism to work out successfully" a sufficient reason for the rise of a school of mysticism in which the barrier between the finite and the infinite is thrown down and religion becomes the whole of life,—"the gulf into which man throws all his earthly joys and sorrows, the anodyne with which he puts to sleep the energies of thought and will, all the cares of his divided life, and ultimately his divided life itself." But in considering the history of the age in which the spirit of mysticism arose it is impossible not to observe a connection between its growth in philosophy and its growth in the popular imagination. The same spirit which was inducing men to turn from the old creeds of an abstract polytheism to the excitement of the strange ritual of foreign deities, to turn from the facts of experience to the consolations of a revised subjective faith, was also inducing philosophers to abandon the hard path of reality and seek to solve the problem of existence by projection into the Unknown. In the period inaugurated by Vespasian men found tranquillity: the orgies of the court of Nero gave place to moderation and, save in brief interludes, the temper of the world became restrained: it was then that religion and philosophy took the decisive turn which led each alike to a similar goal,—religion to a humble faith in a compassionate God, philosophy to a transcendental belief in a limitless stream of Emanations linked chain on chain with the Final and Unknowable, peopling the universe with an inexhaustible overflowing of Divinity.

But while this intellectual revolution was in progress, another revolution of greater magnitude was simultaneously at work in a lower stratum of society.

But if it was neglected by the rich, Christianity was not at any rate confined to the poor, and by the time of

Alexander it had permeated to almost every district of the Empire. With its principle of equality and its appeal to every class, Roman rulers saw in it a menace to the public safety, and the charge of "hatred of the human race" was one which Christianity long incurred. Its meetings and associations, unratified by the Senate or the Emperor, were opposed to law, and the misrepresentations of ignorance and malice ascribed to them crimes and dangers of every description. Yet Christianity flourished more in the provinces than in Rome, but not more perhaps in the lowest than in the middle classes. "Das Christenthum war so gut eine Religion wie irgend eine andere und eben damit mit den anderen Religionen gleichberichtigt im römischen Reich zu existiren." It appears in Rome under Nero and grows continually in spite of persecution until we find apologists under Hadrian arguing with confidence against the world, and martyrs under Marcus Aurelius suffering willingly in the service of a cause which is already won. In a century and a half of increasing activity, the Church collected its canon of scriptures, gave precision to its doctrine, practically completed its organisation, and found converts in every quarter of the civilised world.

From the modern standpoint the records of Christianity take precedence in intrinsic importance of all the records of the history of the Roman Empire. This was the one vital force which contained the seeds of uninterrupted growth, the one element of progress in a declining society, the factor that was to mould the history of the after ages. Thus we judge in the light of results. But to the educated Roman Christianity was only superstition,—a novel and contemptible, perhaps a dangerous, superstition. Imperial Rome is still of the ancient world, the last flicker of the flame before it sinks into the dust and ashes of the

Dark Ages, to be rekindled in the brighter dawn of the Renaissance. Despite the ardour of its missionaries, despite the fearlessness of its apologists, and the testimony of its martyrs, Christianity seems to move in a world apart, and those who plead[1] for the unified study of the pagan and the Christian life perhaps forget that it is possible for two epochs to overlap and that one country and one time may see two organisations so divergent that the terms of the one are inapplicable to the other. In the Christian writers we may learn something of the organisation of the Empire and its social prosperity, but of its spirit we shall find no true account: still less in Roman literature shall we find a reliable description of the Christian Church.

To see the Empire as it appeared to nine-tenths of its inhabitants, we must imagine an idle metropolis inhabited by a rich aristocracy and a powerful Emperor at the head of his army, surrounded by a vast aggregation of communities, each partly independent and self-governing, yet all subject and obedient to the head,—the whole encircled by a fringe of fortified camps and legionaries in the field, ever ready to repel invasion from without or relentlessly to crush public disturbance from within:—the ancient world agglomerated and organised and partly made uniform,—the perfection of an ancient Empire worked on ancient lines.

In this state of society the most striking political development was the omnipotence to which the soldiery in the third century attained. From the days of Julius Caesar the power of the army had gradually increased. During the first two centuries it became more and more a force to be reckoned with, but the day of its overwhelming might was still to come. The great mass of

[1] e.g. Prof. Ramsay, in his *Church in the Roman Empire.*

troops recruited from the half-Romanised provinces had yet to recognise the completeness of their power, for they were opposed by the force of praetorians, men recruited from Italy and the nearer provinces, claiming to embody the interests and traditions of Rome itself, sometimes successfully taking into their own hands the destinies of the Principate. Under Hadrian's constitutional reorganisation, the government, becoming more military and more bureaucratic, gave a great impetus to the power of the soldiery, but it was Septimius Severus who surrendered to the army the ultimate administration. In his march upon Rome the weakness of the praetorians, enervated by long years of peace and a life of luxury, was made abundantly manifest. Dismissing that worthless crew, he brought his own legions into Italy, and henceforward the legionaries were paramount even before the gates of Rome: the praetorian guard itself was transformed into a body of picked men whose reward for long and faithful service with the colours was increased pay and restricted duties in the metropolis of the world. The dangers and the results of that innovation will become apparent in this essay; it was an innovation which changed the whole aspect of the history of Rome.

It was not indeed that Septimius advisedly founded a military despotism: his object was far different. He saw that the Dyarchy had failed, and he merely strove to set upon a firm footing that monarchy which he rightly felt to be the only possible form of government. To this end he turned, like any other absolute monarch, to the army, and based his power upon military support. But he made one cardinal mistake, the effects of which left their mark on history for years to come. He taught the soldiers their power, but he did not teach them discipline; on the contrary he pandered to them. "Enrich the army" was

his motto. In the light of the weakness and inconstancy of many of his successors, it must be admitted that the policy of Septimius led almost inevitably to military anarchy. Future Emperors were called upon to deal with a question of great delicacy. To overthrow the military power was a task now beyond accomplishment: to lead back the army into the provinces and so leave Italy once more immune was scarcely less impossible: to restrain the selfish instincts of a body long accustomed to licence and now exalted beyond its dreams was a task rendered only the more difficult by the neglect of Septimius to perform it. In fact succeeding Emperors, as Machiavelli long ago perceived, were caught between two fires. They were compelled to placate the soldiery, and they could not entirely forget the demands of the civil government, while soldiers and people possessed divergent aims. "The people love tranquillity and therefore like princes who are pacific, but the soldiers prefer a prince of military spirit who is insolent, cruel, and rapacious. They wish him to exercise these qualities on the people, so that they may get double pay and give vent to their avarice and cruelty. Thus it came about that those Emperors who, by nature or art, had not such a reputation as could keep both parties in check, invariably were ruined, and the greater number of them who were raised to the Empire being new men, knowing the difficulties of these two opposite dispositions, confined themselves to satisfying the soldiers, and thought little of injuring the people. This choice was necessary, princes not being able to avoid being hated by some one. They must first try not to be hated by the mass of the people: if they cannot accomplish this, they must use every means to escape the hatred of the most powerful parties. And therefore these Emperors, who being new men had need of extraordinary favours, adhered to the

soldiers more willingly than to the people: whether this however was of use to them or not depended on whether the prince knew how to maintain his reputation with them[1]." The policy of Septimius hastened the fall of Rome. The policy with which Alexander sought to counteract his faults proved ephemeral and insecure. Already the shadow of the barbarian invasions had fallen on the Empire. Already that great society had some foreknowledge of the melancholy path which it must tread. A few strides onwards, some reckless, some wilful, one brief and unavailing attempt at retrogression,—and the Roman world had plunged into the quagmire of military anarchy which made it an easy prey to the enemies who were gathering around.

In the days of Alexander the political history of Rome was passing through a momentous stage. Whatever its social and intellectual condition, the corner-stone of the Empire was the Principate, and the corner-stone of the Principate was the army. On the fortunes of the Emperor and the army, the safety and progress of the Roman world depended. Thus for the present purpose the record of the great intellectual movements which were in progress must give place to the history of the man who held within his grasp the destiny of Rome.

[1] Machiavelli, *The Prince*, c. xix. (Translated by Luigi Ricci.)

CHAPTER II.

THE FAMILY OF BASSIANUS.

In the third century the Principate was a precarious office hedged round with a thousand dangers from the caprice of the praetorians, the turbulence of the fickle populace, or the sudden thrust of an assassin's knife. It possessed the safeguards neither of a constitutional magistracy nor of a hereditary monarchy. However illogical the latter system of government may be in a civilised community, it has at least the element of stability: a succession automatically decided by long-established principles of birth will escape challenge, when the arbitrary choice of a powerful minority will call into play popular passions and the jealousy of rivals. The Emperor of Rome succeeded by no hereditary right. Though on his own pretension he was an absolute king, he was still in theory only a citizen among citizens, a man entrusted by national election with a combination of Republican offices, the leading statesman in a pure democracy. In actual fact however he often was little more than the chosen leader of a dominant faction, a tool in the hands of his adherents on whom he was dependent not merely for his power but for his existence.

It was a difficult part for any man to play, an impossible part for any man who failed to realise the limitations

of his power. The immediate predecessors of Alexander, with the exception of Septimius, had lacked the qualities which could establish the security of their position. Wanting in strength, wanting in tact, wanting in morality, they had quickly forfeited their popularity and paid for their elevation with their lives. It is a remarkable fact that Alexander, who rose to the Principate in 222 A.D. to govern Rome for thirteen years with moderation and to set an example of nobility of character to the Roman world, was himself the close relation of the men who had but just been cast in quick succession from the throne into an unhonoured grave. After the close of the true Antonine dynasty the Imperial rôle was played in turn by men of varied fortunes and descent. The Emperors made it their policy to establish the succession in their house, but they could not stand against the caprice of their subjects. Often the hollow device of adoption effected a compromise between the imperial policy and the desires of the people, but actual heredity counted for little and popularity however gained was the basis of ascendancy, just as a loss of popularity was the signal for assassination or for civil war. A bid for empire; the acclamation of the soldiery; a meteoric Imperial career; death by the swords of the mutinous army; that is the epitome of the life of the majority of the Caesars.

Many families were thus called around the throne, but few enjoyed so remarkable a history as that of Alexander. Of his father and his father's family we have only the most meagre knowledge, but his ancestry on his mother's side was romantic and in a way distinguished. Dio indeed speaks slightingly of his family and describes his great-aunt Julia as of plebeian origin[1], but the other authorities

[1] Dio LXXVIII. 24: ἡ μὲν ἐκ δημοτικοῦ γένους ἐπὶ μέγα ἀρθεῖσα.

are not in agreement. Aurelius Victor states that his grandfather was named Bassianus, and was a priest of Elagabalus in Phoenicia[1]. Lampridius claims that Julia was of noble birth[2], while Herodian and Capitolinus record that the family originated in Emesa[3]. These scattered references would not advance our knowledge far by themselves, but other evidence can be adduced to amplify them. Alexander's cousin (Elagabalus)—and probably Alexander himself—was priest of the Sun-god at Emesa[4]. That priesthood was hereditary and once had carried with it the title of king[5]. Bassianus, as priest of the Sun-god, held a position of no small dignity and pomp, for the priest was the leader of the brilliant Oriental ceremonial which attracted worshippers to the temple at Emesa from all the country round[6]. Such a position would ordinarily in Asia be held only by a man of high family and rank[7], fully justifying the epithet "nobilis" which Lampridius applies to it, and considerable difficulty has accordingly been found by some critics in the term which Dio applies to Julia's ancestry[8]. But the difference of phrase is in reality one also of attitude. Dio, the great historian of

[1] Aur. Vict. *Epit.* 23: "Bassianus nomine fuerat solis sacerdos: quem Phoenices, unde erat, Heliogabalum nominabant." Cf. *Epit.* 21: "Hic (Caracalla) Bassianus ex avi materni nomine dictus est."

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* 5.

[3] Herod. v. 3. 2, Capit. *Macrinus* 9.

[4] Herod. v. 6, Lamp. *Heliogab.* 2, Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 23, Eutrop. 22; Herodian, v. 3. 4, asserts that Alexander was also dedicated to the priesthood, and there is no particular reason to doubt his word.

[5] Dio LIV. 9. Cf. Duruy, *History of Rome and the Roman People* (translated by Clarke), VI. p. 116. It seems that the hereditary nature of the office ended with Elagabalus or Alexander. Neither had issue, so far as is recorded: neither is it known by whom the priesthood was subsequently held.

[6] Herod. v. 3. 4.

[7] Cf. Porrath, *Der Kaiser Alex. Sev.*, p. 6.

[8] δημοτικὸν γένος, cf. supra.

Rome, representing the majesty of the Roman name and the traditional Senatorial aspirations, could not but speak of any provincial priest as "plebeian" however exalted his rank might be; whereas Lampridius, the court biographer, would speak in exaggerated eulogy of the ancestry of his hero. There can be no reasonable doubt that Alexander was a descendant of the Sun priest Bassianus, intimately linked with a long tradition of service in the ceremonial of a distinctively Oriental god[1]. The Sun-god himself played no small part in the history of this period. An Oriental "Baal," resembling many other deities imported into Rome, he was designed by Elagabalus to dominate the religion of Rome and to represent the symbol and authority for the despotism by divine right which that iniquitous monarch sought to exercise over a credulous empire.

Distinction comes by accident as often as by merit, and it was by accident that this provincial priest, who might have been the ancestor of an unending series of priests in a position similar to his own, numbered instead among his immediate descendants four Augustae and four Emperors of Rome. A marriage connection with Septimius Severus in the early stages of his life, when he was already high in the administrative career, laid the foundation of the ascendancy of the family, and the connection, it seems, was due to nothing more than the chance utterance of some astrologer. The elder daughter of Bassianus (Domna was her Phoenician name[2]) was said

[1] Further indications of the descent from Bassianus are found in the prevalence of that name amongst Alexander's relations. Alexander himself was Bassianus according to Dio (LXXVIII. 30). Elagabalus was Bassianus according to Herodian (v. 3. 3): so too Caracalla (Spart. *Carac.* I., cf. Aur. Vict. *Ep.* 21). Soaemias, mother of Elagabalus, was Bassiana (Epigramma Velitranum ap. Clinton, *Fast. Rom.* II. 40).

[2] The conjecture that Domna is a contraction of the Latin Domina

to be possessed of a "royal nativity." That propitious deduction of astrology came to the ears of Septimius about the year 185 A.D. at a time when he was a widower[1] in search of a second wife. Superstitious and ambitious, Septimius embraced the happy augury[2], and the daughter of Bassianus became his wife[3].

is not improbable: Domna might be vulgar Latin. But most authorities regard Domna as the Phoenician name. Julia was added on her marriage: Augusta on the accession of Septimius.

[1] He had lost his first wife, Marcia, when governor of Lyonnese Gaul.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* 5. Lampridius appears uncertain as to the genuineness of the story, but he quotes the authority of Marius Maximus, from whom he derived much of his most valuable information for the period.

[3] The date of the marriage is as obscure as most of the lesser events of the period.

Dio LXXIV. 3 says: "Faustina the wife of Marcus spread the marriage couch for them in the temple of Venus in the palace," and this would seem to fix the date before 175 when Faustina left Rome for the last time to join the Emperor in the East. But it is tolerably clear from the context (cf. the words below *ταῦτα μὲν ἐκ τῶν ὀνειράτων ἔμαθεν*) that the words of Dio refer only to a dream, and the phrase *ἐν τῷ Ἀφροδισίῳ* could bear no congruous sense unless this is assumed. Moreover it is probable that in 175 Julia was only six years old. Without doubt the marriage was later. Septimius it seems lost his first wife when governor of Lyonnese Gaul, and he appears to have attained that office in 186 (Dio LXXIV. 3). His son was born on the 4th April, 188. The marriage probably therefore fell in 187.

In this connection there is a point of some interest. Maesa, younger sister of Julia, had a grandson in 204 (App. II.): probably therefore she was married before 187. Yet she married a consular named Avitus. It is clear that if the younger daughter of Bassianus married a consular before an astrological accident had cast upon his family the lustre of the connection with Septimius, the Phoenician family must have been more distinguished than the "*δημοτικός*" of Dio would suggest. The high priest of Emesa enjoyed a high social position.

It should however be mentioned that the date of the death of Marcia is not certain: it is conceivable that she died immediately after marriage (about 177) and that Septimius married Julia during his sojourn in Syria, which began in 179.

The Syrian whom Septimius had thus chosen was a woman of no ordinary calibre: from this time onwards she assumed a high position in the Roman world. Gifted in a high degree with the energy and cunning of her race she rose to be the foremost woman of her day. It is the general view that the influence of Julia was evidenced immediately on the accession of Septimius. The purchase of the Empire from the praetorians by the craven Julian had given rise to universal discontent and led to immediate rebellion in the provinces. Septimius called his men to arms within a month from the date of that infamous sale. Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus were scarcely less energetic in rousing Britain and Syria. The swift march of Septimius brought the praetorians to obedience and Julian to his death before three months of that unhappy reign had run their course. But though the conquest of Rome was the matter of a moment, the overthrow of Niger and Albinus was only effected after arduous campaigns. Capitolinus[1], whose word has usually been accepted, says that it was the mind of Julia which instigated the Emperor's rapidity of action in the civil wars and led to the ultimate establishment of his power. It is difficult however to believe that in politics Julia held so predominant a position as has been ascribed to her. The phrase in Capitolinus is just such an assertion as is frequently found in the writers of the Augustan histories. When it is remembered that Dio never mentions Julia's influence on the wars and that coins and inscriptions are equally silent on the subject, grave doubt necessarily falls on the chance utterance of an unreliable historian.

Moreover Septimius with all his jealous pride was not a man to be dictated to; his military knowledge and

[1] Cap. *Alb.* 3: "Illos utrosque bello oppressisse maxime precibus uxoris adductus."

capacity were such that he would still less need a woman's prayers to convince him of the necessity for immediate action against capable and energetic foes.

Nor is it likely that Julia held a prominent political position throughout the life of Septimius[1]. At any rate during the ascendancy of Plautianus she did not[2]: she was his avowed enemy and he held the Emperor's ear. Even after his fall[3] there was Papinian and there were the members of the *principis consilium*—a strong body at the time—to exercise their influence against the domination of a woman.

Julia without doubt was influential, and, after the death of Septimius, her beauty and attractions[4] as well as her ability served to give her a virtual ascendancy[5] in the reign of her son. But in the time of Septimius her influence was rather social and literary than political; she devoted herself to those literary and philosophic[6] studies which gained for her in her lifetime so splendid a literary reputation. The fact that she remained in Rome during the ascendancy of Plautianus bears out this view;

[1] Her position was rather honourable than influential. She was Augusta: she was mater deum (Cohen III. 339), mater castrorum, mater senatus (Orell. 913). She was worshipped, apparently in her lifetime, as Ἑστία, as Νέα Δημήτηρ, as Νέα Ἥρα Ῥωμαία (*C. I. G.* 2815, 3642, 3956 b). Ceuleneer (*Vie de Septime Sévère*, p. 158) also ascribes to her the title mater patriae without citing authority: he is probably thinking of *C. I. L.* 3. 1374, MAT • AVGG • MAT • SEN • M • PATR • which however is rather to be referred to Mammaea.

[2] Dio LXXVIII. 24; v. Ceuleneer, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

[3] Plautianus was executed in 204, probably in January. The old date, 203, is untenable in view of Renier *I. A.* 70.

[4] Spart. *Caracall.* 10.

[5] Dio LXXVII. 18 and LXXVIII. 4.

[6] Cf. Philostr. *Vit. Apoll.* II. 30. Diogenes Laertius is thought to have dedicated to Julia his history of the Greek Philosophers, but the question is disputed.

she could not have done so with safety, had she been his rival for political honours.

It is difficult with our scanty materials to dogmatise on the justification of her literary fame. Letters were decadent at Rome,—they had long been so,—and her patronage of literature and art may have represented little more than an open house to the impecunious author and a dilettante study of the works of the past. But her reputation, however deserved, is undoubted, and she was long remembered as the greatest literary patroness of the later Roman times.

Whatever may have been the literary attainments of Julia, whatever her political capacity, her morality conformed to the general level of the age. "Septimius was not over-scrupulous in domestic relations[1]," writes Spartianus, "he did not reject his wife in spite of her infidelity, and in spite of her conspiracy against him." Of the nature of the conspiracy we remain in ignorance, but her character gave rise in later days to the story of an incestuous connection with her son[2]. The story may indeed be dismissed as a fabrication, for the silence of Dio, who was a contemporary not over-indulgent in his estimate of Julia, may be taken as conclusive. But even as a fabrication the story is an instructive lesson in the moral standards of the age, for these fictions even of third-rate compilers and scandalous tales of a prurient populace could not have arisen with the frequency and regularity with which they occur in records of these ages, had not immorality come to be regarded as a fashion rather than a crime in a large section of society.

A royal nativity, united to the innate capacity of the lady who enjoyed so propitious a horoscope, had thus

[1] Spart. *S. Severus* 18.
[2] Spart. *Caracall.* 10.

raised the family of Bassianus from its Phoenician obscurity. It was soon to enjoy an unenviable notoriety on the accession of Julia's two sons, Caracalla and Geta; the incompetence of the one, the tyranny of the other, the mutual aversion and hostility of both, soon brought the house of Septimius to an end amid universal execration.

But the family of Bassianus was not yet extinct; the grandsons of his younger daughter Maesa succeeded in turn to the Principate, the one to disgrace it with orgies such as Rome had never known before, the second to restore in some measure the prosperity and morality which his predecessors had striven to sweep away. Maesa[1] was a woman only less remarkable than Julia. She too was a native of Emesa, and she married, probably at an early age, Julius Avitus, a Roman of proconsular rank who had governed Asia, Mesopotamia and Cyprus in succession. Her early years were spent uninterruptedly in the seclusion of the provinces, for Avitus remained abroad, after his marriage, in his administrative position, and it was not until the year 193, the year of the accession of Septimius, that she came to Rome to join the royal suite. Under Septimius and his son she lived at court in honourable leisure. The private means and public powers of Avitus may have in themselves rendered her wealthy: at no period was the government of the provinces an unprofitable profession and there is nothing to show that Avitus refrained, when proconsul, from the established practice of extortion[2]. But the splendour and luxury of

[1] Maesa, like Domna, received the name Julia and became an Augusta. But while Domna is generally described by the historians as Julia, Maesa still retained her Phoenician name.

[2] A proconsul at this time received an indemnity of 1,000,000 sesterces in addition to the usual allowances. Apart from this even an upright governor could save much money through his office. Cicero did so in Cilicia.

the Court, the tyrannical rule of Septimius and the close relationship to the Emperor must have provided additional opportunity for amassing property, and Herodian assures[1] us that when, on the murder of Caracalla, Maesa was ordered to quit Rome, she took back to Emesa great wealth which her royal authority and long palace life had placed within her reach.

It was at a later date, in the reign of Elagabalus and perhaps in the early years of Alexander's rule, that the ability of Maesa first found scope for manifestation in politics. But though at first she had none of the influence which Julia wielded, she was scarcely her inferior in capacity. Her family consisted of two daughters. The elder, Soaemias, had married a man of Syrian extraction, one Sextus Varius Marcellus[2], a native of Apameia, who served as imperial procurator and was raised to the Senate before the date of his early death. The capacity of Soaemias fell far short of that of her kinswomen Julia, Maesa, and Mammaea, the mother of Alexander. Her history is obscure, and even her name is imperfectly recorded. Symiamira, says Capitolinus, and Lampridius concurs[3]. Dio and Herodian[4] give Soaemis. But the inscriptions and coins[5] agree for the most part in giving the name as Soaemias, and that evidence is the best we have.

Herodian's statement that Maesa lived at court is borne out by a current rumour that Elagabalus was the son of Soaemias and Caracalla, of whom the latter lived continuously in Rome in the first years of the century. Later, at the time of the conspiracy against Macrinus,

[1] Herod. v. 3.

[2] Dio LXXVIII. 30.

[3] Capit. *Macr.* IX. 2, Lamp. *Elagab.* II. 1.

[4] Herod. v. 3. 3.

[5] Most coins give COAIMIAC: some however give COAIMIC or COVAIMIC.

the crafty Maesa did not scruple to turn that rumour to account, and sacrificing the honour of her daughter (an easy sacrifice in those days), she openly proclaimed Elagabalus as the son of Caracalla to the credulous legionaries, who, making the wish the father to the thought[1], accepted his Imperial paternity.

Soaemias seems to have had other sons besides[2]; they are mentioned, but not named, and then pass into oblivion; they must have died at an early age, for Elagabalus succeeded in his early boyhood, and the survival of his brothers in the time of his reign could hardly have escaped the notice of the historians.

The character of Soaemias is evidenced by her coins[3], of which many are still extant. They show an imperious eastern countenance and an expression of cunning and sagacity. Her head is generally accompanied on the reverse by the figure of an Eastern goddess, a reminiscence of her Syrian origin and of the Oriental priesthood of her son. It is on a coin of Soaemias that the figure of the Syrian Astarte is first found in the Roman mint[4]. Lampridius regards her as a domineering woman who virtually ruled Rome during the Principate of her son[5]. It is more in accordance with her character to suppose that while she shared his vices, she also shared his incapacity, and left the government to the firmer hands of Maesa.

Mammaea[6], the second daughter of Maesa, was the

[1] Herod. v. 4, *πιστεύσαντες Ἀντωνίνου τε εἶναι τέκνον καὶ ὁμοιότατόν γε (βλέπειν γὰρ οὕτως ἤθελον)*.

[2] Cf. a *bilingue marmor* cited by Eckhel: Julia Soaemias Bassiana... cum filis. Cf. Orelli 946 and *C. I. G.* 6627.

[3] Some are reproduced in Cohen iv. 387.

[4] The figure of Astarte also occurs on coins of Alexander from Tyre struck between 219 and 222, v. Cohen iv. 473 (Alexander, Nos. 703–6).

[5] Lamp. *Elagab.* 1.

[6] As regards the spelling of the name v. Appendix IV.

mother of Alexander Severus, her only son[1]. When still abroad she had married a Syrian named Gessius Marcianus[2] from Arca who is known only by the single statement[3] that he had filled more than once the position of imperial procurator[4]. Around the birth of Alexander hangs the same scandal that sullies the name of Soaemias. Mammaea herself did not scruple to assert that he was the son of Caracalla, and Alexander even after his accession permitted his discretion to conquer his filial respect, and gave official sanction to the tale. In a law preserved in the Codex[5], there are the words, "et quae a divo Antonino patre meo et quae a me rescripta sunt."

[1] It appears that Mammaea had also two daughters: our knowledge of one is derived solely from the following passage in Capitolinus (*Maximini duo*, c. 29). De hoc adolescente (sc. Maximino iuniore) Alexander Aurelius ad matrem suam scribit Mameam, cupiens ei suam Theocliam dare, in haec verba: "Mi mater, si Maximinus senior dux noster et quidem optimus non aliquid in se barbarum contineret, iam ego Maximino iuniori Theocliam tuam dedissem. sed timeo, ne soror mea Graecis munditiis erudita barbarum socerum ferre non possit, quamvis ipse adolescens et pulcher et scolasticus et ad Graecas munditias eruditus esse videatur. haec quidem cogito, sed te tamen consulo, utrum Maximinum, Maximini filium, generum velis an Messalam ex familia nobili, oratorem potentissimum eundemque doctissimum et, nisi fallor, in rebus bellicis, si adplicetur, fortem futurum." haec Alexander de Maximino. de quo nos nihil amplius habemus dicere. The mutilated passage in Dio LXXVIII. 34 *ad init.* seems to imply that an elder sister of Alexander was killed by Macrinus, but the question is not without difficulty. Cf. Porrath, *Der Kaiser Alex. Sev.*, p. 10.

[2] Lamp. is wrong in describing Alexander (*Alex. Sev.* 1) as Varii filius, unless Gessius had the praenomen Varius.

[3] Dio LXXVIII. 30, Herod. v. 3, Zosimus II. 3.

[4] Gessius was of lower rank. In strict Roman law Mammaea on her marriage with him would suffer "capitis diminutio." She however received a privilegium allowing her to retain her Senatorial rank (Ulp. in *Dig.* I. 9. 12). The privilegium was really ratified by Severus and Caracalla together, though Ulpian attributes it to the latter alone (Mommsen, *Droit Public*, VII. 60).

[5] *Cod. Justin.* XII. 36. 4. Cf. Zos. I. 11. Capit. *Max. duo*, I. 5.

Inscriptions too proclaim him to be "Antonini Magni filius" and "Severi nepos[1]." But this tale, however definite, will not reflect upon the character of Mammaea, whose virtue will often appear in these pages. The scandal was a political one, promulgated and sustained to win and keep the affection of the army[2].

Without doubt the family of Maesa lived happily and securely at Rome throughout the reigns of Septimius and his son. But the events of the year 217 A.D. temporarily overshadowed the fortunes of her house. The circumstances which led to the death of Caracalla were typical of the age. The severity of his government and the extortionate cruelty which he inflicted on the provinces could not in themselves suffice to bring about his ruin, for his policy was after all agreeable and lucrative to the army. An accident compassed his fall. Opilius Macrinus, a man of low birth, a Moor from Caesarea, had risen to be joint *praefectus praetorio* and enjoyed the full but fickle sunshine of Imperial favour, when some fanatical African astrologer[3] prophesied the prefect's succession to the crown. So dangerous a prediction, portending to the anxious imagination of the time the doom of Caracalla, spread quickly through the provinces. The man was brought to Rome only to persist in the accuracy of his prophecy.

[1] In inscriptions Alexander is very frequently described as Magni Antonini filius, Severi nepos, and no other parentage is ever ascribed to him. Seeing that no marriage of Mammaea with her cousin Caracalla was ever presumed, it is amazing that this parentage should have been officially accepted without comment. It is but another illustration of the small importance attached at this period to the marriage relation.

[2] Cf. Dio LXXIX. 19 and especially Herod. v. 7. 3. Muche (*Forschungen*, etc. p. 7) goes to great pains to prove that the story was unfounded, a position which in recent times has not been questioned.

[3] His name is said to have been Serapion.

The despatches on the subject sent to the court, which was then resident at Antioch, fell into the hands of Macrinus, who recognised his death-sentence and resolved to avert it. In a few days Martialis[1],—according to Herodian[2], a centurion whose brother had recently been executed,—according to Dio[3], a desperate soldier angered at his non-promotion, sprang upon the Emperor at a calculated opportunity as he was journeying to the Temple of the Moon at Carrhae, and Macrinus, unsuspected of a share in the outrage, seized the vacant throne.

It was an ill day for the family of Bassianus, yet not so ill as if Macrinus had taken an open share in the assassination. Julia would naturally be the first object of the new tyrant's jealousy. Yet as he had dissembled his part in the murder, so to the Queen Mother he assumed an attitude of feigned respect. Julia happened at the moment to be at Antioch[4] where the news of the disaster struck her with dismay. Beside a mother's affection inevitably evoked in the presence of death, her royal spirit could ill brook the downward path from royalty to the lowly station of a subject. For a moment the specious representations of Macrinus may have quieted her alarm, but soon she sank again into despondency and ended her chequered career by a voluntary death[5].

The account of her suicide leads the historian into a digression on the fickleness of fate. Raised from membership of the *bourgeoisie* to be a queen, she had lived to see her younger son murdered in her arms by the mad jealousy of a brother who himself was soon to pay the penalty of an overbearing character, and finally she was

[1] Dio and Herodian give the name in their Greek text as Martialios.
[2] Herod. IV. 13. [3] Dio LXXVIII. 5.
[4] Dio LXXVIII. 23–4. The passage however is imperfectly preserved.
[5] After death Julia was consecrated as Diva (Eckhel, VII. 197).

herself to seek death as a refuge from greater misfortune. "Viewing that history," says Dio, "who can call the life of royalty blest, unless it be accompanied by happiness true and unalloyed, by prosperity pure and lasting?" How many histories during this epoch might have inspired the same sentiment! Not an Emperor, not a courtier perhaps, but felt the hard hand of a self-seeking age.

For Maesa and her family[1] a different fate was in store. So great was the affection and esteem of the people for Julia that the Emperor dared not either banish or harm her. But after her death her relatives,—three women and two boys whose position if honourable was not yet influential,—might be despatched to their native Emesa to vegetate in a renewed obscurity, all the more safely as the husbands both of Soaemias[2] and of Mammaea were now dead.

The names of Elagabalus and Alexander, assumed by Maesa's grandsons, were as yet unknown. The elder boy was first styled Bassianus after his great-grandfather, and the younger's name was Alexianus[3]. How the name

[1] It is urged by Muche (*Forschungen*, etc. p. 8) that throughout this period Maesa was in Rome alone, while her daughters remained in Syria. The fact that Soaemias married a Syrian seems to support this view; the passage in Herodian v. 3 (*ἱέρωντο δὲ αὐτοὶ θεῷ ἡλίῳ*) and Dio LXXVIII. 30 are cited without much reason in support of it. But while it may be admitted as probable that Soaemias and Mammaea were not continuously at Rome, the statement that Alexander first came to Rome after the death of Macrinus (Muche, p. 8) seems unwarranted. It is unlikely that Maesa in her position of prominence would allow her children to live continuously abroad, and at least it is clear that Mammaea was in Rome before the birth of Alexander, for Caracalla was not then in the East, and the fiction of Alexander's parentage would otherwise have fallen to the ground.

[2] Cf. Dio LXXVIII. 30, *καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο τελευτήσαντος* (sc. *Οὐαρίου Μαρκέλλου*).

[3] Dio however gives Bassianus as the name (LXXVIII. 30): Herodian (v. 7. 3) gives Alexianus, which however he seems to regard as his

Alexander arose is doubtful. Perhaps it was conferred on him by the Senate on his return to Rome as an honourable variant for Alexianus; perhaps he assumed it early and arbitrarily to signify his often expressed admiration for the great king of Macedon; perhaps it accrued to him at the date of his adoption[1]. Lampridius[2] however has a different explanation to offer. "He received the name Alexander," we are informed, "because he was born in the temple at Arca dedicated to Alexander the Great, his father happening to have gone there with his wife to offer sacrifice at the time of the festival. A proof of this lies in the fact that his birthday was the anniversary of Alexander's death." The story is as plausible as most of the gossip recorded by Lampridius; but it is

παππῷον ὄνομα: possibly Alexander at first bore two names, Alexianus and Bassianus. Julia Soaemias appears in *C. I. L.* x. 6569 as Bassiana, and the name Bassianus may well therefore have been a cognomen in the family, but Alexander never used it in his later life. It has been suggested, though with little probability, that both Elagabalus and Alexander took the name from Caracalla who was feigned to be the father of each (Wahle, *De. Imp. Sev. Alex.* p. 4). A more probable conjecture is that Alexander was first called Alexianus and subsequently upon his adoption took over the name Bassianus which Elagabalus had abandoned. Cf. Porrath, *l.c.* p. 7. But the point is obscure and scarcely worth enquiry.

[1] Herodian v. 7. 3, Dio LXXIX. 17. Herodian suggests that the name was intended to support the official version of Alexander's parentage; Caracalla had styled himself Alexander the Great. Dio on the other hand thinks the name was given at the instigation of the god Elagabalus, and is followed by Muche (*Forschungen*, etc. p. 6); but Dio is addicted to recording miracles and supernatural phenomena as if they were historical. It may be added that Lamp. (*Alex. Sev.* I. 1) describes Alexander as "Varii filius, Variae nepos." This is an error. Elagabalus however was Varius from his father and Avitus from his paternal grandfather. Aurelius Victor is similarly in error (*Epit.* 23) in giving Alexander's name as Marcellus: "hic Marcellum qui post Alexander dictus est...Caesarem fecit."

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* 5.

probably aetiological, and at any rate the "proof" is based on an inaccuracy, for Alexander the Great died on the 13th June and Alexander Severus was born on the 1st October[1].

The name under which the elder of Maesa's grandsons is known to fame arose in circumstances more picturesque. On settling again at Emesa, after her enforced retirement from Rome, Maesa turned to the religion of her native land to find an honourable employment for her grandsons. Near Emesa stood the temple of the Syrian god Elagabalus—Heliogabalus, the Sun-god, the Greeks at Rome preferred to call him, though it is from the words *al gebal*, the mountain, that the divinity actually derived his name[2]. To this deity the young Bassianus (and it is said Alexianus also[3]) was dedicated as priest.

The elder cousin soon became conspicuous in his new rôle, and even dared himself to assume the sacred name of the god he served. While Macrinus was still delaying at Antioch, seeking courage to proceed to Rome, the large Roman army which he had imprudently allowed to be encamped near Emesa, the home of the relations of Septimius, saw and remembered the young priest officiating in the crowded temple frequented by worshippers from far and near[4]. His barbaric priestly robes and the precious jewels of his diadem, as he offered sacrifice and joined in sacred dances to the sound of flute and clarionet,

[1] v. Appendix II.

[2] Gibbon, ed. Bury, I. 144 note.

[3] Herod. v. 3. 3. It is doubtful however whether Herodian is correct. The priesthood of Alexander is not heard of again.

[4] I have followed for the most part the account of Herodian, which differs materially from that of Dio. It is more picturesque and therefore perhaps less trustworthy. But it is also more connected, and seems to be the record of first-hand information. The passage in Dio is considerably mutilated, and less easily intelligible.

set off the beauty of his youthful form, and stirred the loyalty of the soldiers towards the old royal house. The rumour of illegitimacy and of royal birth was set on foot again and sedulously emphasised. The soldiers mutinied, and the overweening temper of Macrinus, which allowed him to underestimate the danger, gave the insurrection time to grow until the whole army deserted the newly elected king, and Macrinus paid the debt that the Principate demanded of so many of its suitors. The house of Bassianus was restored.

Revolutions took place in the Roman Empire at this time with a frequency and regularity only possible under a disorganised constitution. Hence the pretensions of Macrinus were suddenly shattered, and Maesa found the path to Rome open again within a year from the time of her retirement. She and her son however did not hasten at once to the city; his native Syria was a safer refuge for the new autocrat of all the world. Elagabalus contented himself by travelling as far as Nicomedia, and there spent the winter of 218. Already at this early stage there appeared a foreshadowing of the disgrace to come. The Oriental pomp of priesthood had sunk too deeply into his boyish imagination to permit of a rational and sober life. The Emperor, of Syrian parentage, abandoned himself forthwith to riotous revelry, barbaric religious solemnities, and costly and useless ostentation only congruous to an Oriental character[1].

A huge picture of the Emperor in Eastern sacerdotal robes heralded his entry into Rome; it was followed by the establishment in the city of all the paraphernalia of

[1] The description of the character of Elagabalus given with general agreement by Dio, Herodian, and Lampridius may be accepted as substantially correct; the details however have doubtless been exaggerated; scandals grow in the narration.

his religion[1], and the overthrow of the old religious rites. The outrage thus perpetrated on the moral feeling of the community is almost without parallel in the history of nations. Though Rome had before now admitted many deities within its walls, yet up to this time the comity of nations had demanded that they should exist side by side with the Roman gods without impugning their authority. According to the view of the ancient world each nation had a right to worship its own god in its own way without interference, and in its own sphere any one religion was regarded as being as efficacious as another[2].

But to Elagabalus this phase of international law and international morality (for it was really such) counted for less than nothing. To him the Phoenician Sun-god was all in all, and the gods of Greece and Rome must bow the knee before this new and absolute omnipotence. The earthly form of Elagabalus the god, a mere barbarian fetish, a black conical stone[3], was transported in solemn procession to the metropolis and placed in its temple[4] on the Palatine, and the Emperor while still retaining the office of high priest[5] honoured the gravest and highest

[1] Cf. *C. I. L.* VI. 31776: IMP • CAES • M • AVRELLI • ANTONINI • PII • FELICIS • AVG • PONTIFICIS • MAXIMI • SACERDOTIS • AMPLISSIMI • etc. Elagabalus had several other inscriptions in Rome. Cf. e.g. *C. I. L.* VI. 1081 and 1082, which may probably be referred to him.

[2] For example, the worship of Isis was very prevalent, but it did not seek to subvert the old religion. The devotees of Isis regarded her as the only deity (the religion was monotheistic), but the Roman gods were regarded as manifestations of parts of her divine attributes. Isis was the θεὰ μυριώνυμος, and as such might be worshipped under different names and in different ways.

[3] It has been compared to the black stone of Mecca. The stone appears on coins, and not only on those of Elagabalus. It is seen on a coin of Uranius Antoninus (No. 2, Cohen IV. 503).

[4] Herod. v. 3. 5, Aur. V. *Caes.* 23, Dio LXXIX. 11.

[5] There are several coins with representations of the Emperor as high priest on the obverse, and the stone on the reverse.

of his officials with a subordinate function in the ceremonies. What higher honour could an Emperor bestow?

All the gods of Rome were humbled and subordinated to the new divinity[1]. Juno and Jupiter were at last dethroned. One deficiency however still remained to mar the Sun-god's felicity—he was a bachelor. Pallas was accordingly suggested as his spouse, but the eternal antipathy of peace and war forbade the marriage of the goddess of peace with a personage so warlike; so the Syrian Astarte, worshipped by the Phoenician settlers in Africa, was summoned instead to the bridal couch. So low had the temper of the people fallen that these outrages on the pristine faith were for a time endured without revolt.

The madness of Elagabalus (for he if any of the Emperors deserves in charity the appellation of insane) did not cease with his religious innovations. His government was unstable and he allowed the administration to proceed unguided and unchecked, while he sank into a life of viciousness too loathsome for the pen to describe. His rejection of his first wife, unjustified save by the plea of his royal caprice, and his marriage with a Vestal Virgin whose penalty for the breaking of her vows should

[1] It was this together with the extravagant nature of the rites that constituted the real outrage. The fact that the god was accounted a Sun-god was a recommendation of the religion rather than otherwise. Eastern sun-religions were greatly in vogue in Rome at this time; Mithra and Jupiter Dolichenus (=the Eastern Belus) were Sun-gods. These religions penetrated even to the western confines of the Empire. Cf. e.g. *C. I. L.* II. 807,

SOLI •
INVICT •
AVG •
SACRUM •

Cf. also *C. I. L.* II. 258, 4604, 6308, VI. 50–1, 406–7. *C. I. G.* 6015.

have been a living sepulchre, were acts of little moment and little magnitude in his career. All the unrestrained coarseness that is found in Oriental characters and all the refinements of civilised vice were united in his personality or summoned to minister to his caprice.

Such an Emperor in such a time necessarily courted mutiny. Not even liberal donatives could curb the disgust and contempt of the praetorians, who with all their disorganisation and want of strength preferred a man of power at their head. A pretence of stability united with judicious adulation was the greatest safeguard of the Principate.

If Elagabalus had neither wit nor will to recognise this plain fact, at least his family saw the dangers to which they were exposed. Of the attitude of Soaemias indeed it is difficult to give a definite account, but Lampridius[1] is without doubt wrong in regarding her as the mainspring of the government. The adminstration was probably left in the hands of Maesa, crafty and strong, a woman whose practical experience of politics had had ample opportunity to mature.

At any rate it was Maesa[2] who made the first effort to improve the Imperial position. Within three years of the accession of Elagabalus the enmity of the populace and of the soldiery had been so far aroused that a partner in the government was urgently needed to strengthen the administration. To meet this need Elagabalus was induced, on the plea of the importance of his priestly functions, to adopt his cousin Alexander, to style him Caesar[3], and to surrender to him the reins of

[1] *Elagab.* II. 1.

[2] See the account in Herodian v. 7.

[3] In *C. I. L.* III. 85, etc., and on coins, Alexander is styled IMP·CAES· in the lifetime of Elagabalus. The title was always granted

secular government[1]. The adoption indeed was a solemn farce. Roman law provided that a suitable difference of age should exist between the adopter and the adopted son, but, like Claudius, who for his own purposes legalised marriage with a niece, Elagabalus rode roughshod over the law. Alexander was little more than four years younger than his parent[2]!

However, the act of adoption, ludicrous as it is in modern eyes, was at least diplomatic. It gave a sorely needed security to Maesa[3] who on the fall of Elagabalus might now hope to save her life and fortunes through the elevation of her younger grandson; the murmurs of the praetorians were silenced by the expectation of better

by the Emperor as a sign of appointment to the succession; it was however often granted at the suggestion of the Senate, and that body expected to be informed when it was given (Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 454). Lampridius writes in *Elagab.* 13: "Mandavit ad Senatum ut Caesaris nomen ei abrogaretur," and also, "misit et ad milites litteras quibus iussit ut abrogaretur nomen Caesaris Alexandro," but both statements probably involve an inaccuracy which is again found in Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* I. 2 and 64. According to Herodian (v. 7. 4) the adoption, the grant of the title of Caesar, and Alexander's "designatio" as consul synchronise. Lampridius very specifically says on the other hand that Alexander became Caesar on the death of Macrinus (Lamp. *Elagab.* 5, *Alex. Sev.* 1 and 2): the true date of the adoption was 220, that of the designatio 221: the date at which Alexander became Caesar and the circumstances under which the title was conferred are very doubtful (cf. Muche, *Forschungen*, etc. p. 10) but at any rate it was earlier than the appointment as consul designatus, for we have coins with the legend M • AUR • ALEXANDER CAESAR without addition of COS • DES.

[1] Henceforth, in spite of the dissensions which followed, Alexander was regarded as a partner in the government. In *C. I. L.* VI. 2001, a part of the Fasti of a priestly college (probably the Sodales Antoniniani), dated the 2nd July, 221, Alexander is described as M. Aurelius Alexander Nobilissimus Caesar imperii consors. Cf. *C. I. L.* III. 813, VI. 1016 c. Schiller, *Gesch. d. Rom. Kaiserzeit* I. 764. Eckhel, 7. 268. It was probably the soldiers who insisted on the partnership.

[2] See Appendix II.

[3] Herod. v. 7. 1.

government and by the happy augury of the new Caesar's name; while Elagabalus, in Dio's ironical words[1], congratulated himself upon the possession of a son so old and felt the question of the succession to be settled.

All might now have gone well. Though the peace of the Roman world depended on the character of the Emperor, the efficiency of the administration was far less dependent on his capacities. The collection of the revenue—almost the chief concern of such a state as Rome—was effectively controlled by the imperial procurators, and proceeded as well under one monarch as another. The other departments of the administration were chiefly carried on by governors, and secretaries of state, and by the main body of the civil service, of all of whom we hear little in this turbulent epoch, though we might have had less scanty information about them, if contemporary historians had been gifted with more historical insight and concerned themselves less with the trivialities of court life. It is clear that the management even of an empire, which was for the most part ruled without being administered, required the existence of a civil service of no small size, and this existed in the Departments of the four Imperial Secretaries for Accounts, for Letters, for Petitions, and for Enquiries[2]. These four ministers of state, once freedmen, but since Hadrian knights[3], each had their office in the palace, with a large staff of intelligent slaves who worked in the hope of gaining liberty. Standing in much the same relation to the Emperor as a modern Permanent Secretary to a

[1] LXXIX. 17.

[2] A Rationibus, Ab Epistulis, A Libellis, A Cognitionibus.

[3] This reform of Hadrian was of great importance. It practically ended the *régime* of palace freedmen, and opened up a new and lucrative career for the equestrian order.

Secretary of State, these men bore the brunt of the permanent government. The function of the Emperor was to keep the peace with the army and to preserve order; doing that, he might abandon himself to a life of pleasure with comparative impunity.

Unfortunately however the dexterous move of Elagabalus sufficed to preserve order only for a few months, and the discord which was temporarily allayed was soon aroused again and became more violent than before. No sooner had Alexander been raised to his new dignity than the Emperor endeavoured to allure him into a participation in his revelries[1]. His mother however watched over him with care, trained him in the exercises of manhood, and guarded him from evil associations.

Elagabalus failed to debase his cousin. This failure, combined with the growing affection of the army[2] for Alexander, gave rise to jealousy[3], and jealousy to intrigue. Orders were sent to the soldiers to deprive Alexander of the title of Caesar[4]. His nurses[5] were asked to murder him. Assassins were sent to compass his end.

Such measures were all in vain: "the wicked cannot effect anything against the good," moralises Lampridius. The watchfulness of Maesa only increased; she would not even allow Alexander to eat food from the Emperor's

[1] Herod. v. 7. 4.

[2] Lamp. *Elagab.* XIII. 3.

[3] The accounts given by Lampridius of the relations between Elagabalus and Alexander at this time agree with those of Dio and Herodian and are much fuller. The narrative is chiefly drawn from Marius Maximus and may be relied upon. Marius was a contemporary: he had been praefectus urbi under Macrinus (Dio LXXVIII. 14).

[4] Lamp. *Elagab.* 13. 6, "Misit et ad milites litteras quibus iussit ut abrogaretur nomen Caesaris Alexandro." This may possibly be true: if so, it is a striking comment on the times: the soldiers had no constitutional right to grant the title or to take it away.

[5] Nutritores. Lamp. *Elagab.* XIII. 8.

kitchen for fear of the arts of the poisoner. The care exercised by Maesa was supplemented by that of the soldiers[1] and the citizens. The Senate, who had received the same instructions as the army, preserved an ominous silence and refused to ratify the Emperor's command, and mutiny broke out among the praetorians. While Alexander and his mother were conveyed for greater safety to the camp, some of these ran to the palace and the Imperial pleasure garden where the Emperor was engaged in his amusements. Despite an attempt at concealment he was tracked down and only saved from murder by the promptitude of a prefect who succeeded in arresting the precipitancy of the small body of mutineers who had forced their way into the Emperor's presence.

Meanwhile the main body of the praetorians held a council in their camp and came to a merciful resolution. The life of the Emperor was to be spared; the prayers of an officer despatched thither gained this much; but he was to be subjected to a minute supervision. Actors, racers, freedmen, parasites, eunuchs, all the defiling elements of the palace, were ejected. Hierocles, Cordus, and Mirissimus, three of his chief favourites, were taken from him. The prefects were ordered to prevent a recurrence of the old excesses. The precautions for Alexander's safety were redoubled, and he was forbidden the company of the Emperor's adherents[2].

After the mutiny the year 221 passed quietly to its

[1] Dio LXXIX. 19, *ὑπό τε τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἰσχυρῶς ἐφυλάσσετο.*

[2] Such at least would appear to be the events of the first act in the drama of the fall of Elagabalus. The evidence however is very inconclusive. Herodian, a contemporary, couches his narrative in broad terms and makes no mention of this first mutiny and its resultant reforms. Dio (LXXIX. 19) refers generally to the disturbance, to the coercion of the Emperor, and to the surrender of his favourites. But for the details we are thrown back on Lampridius.

close, but the discord broke out again on New Year's Day. Elagabalus and Alexander were the consuls designate for the coming official year, and on that day the Emperor refused to appear in public with his adopted son. The renewal of the old jealousy which only fear had conquered involved a renewal of the military discontent, and the Emperor was forced to give way. But the end was near. A second mutiny broke out,—its cause cannot be determined[1],—and the Emperor and Soaemias shared a common death.

The murder was accompanied by outrages which only the character of Elagabalus could justify. The soldiers dragged his body through the streets, and tried to throw it down the common sewer. Failing in this, they hurried down to the river bank and flung it into the Tiber, so that it might never find that burial which in Rome meant passport to the future world. The name Antoninus was removed from the list of the dead Emperor's titles and Tiberinus and Tractatitius were substituted for it. All the pent-up hatred of four years of infamy was let loose over the corpse.

Amid such scenes of bloodshed Alexander was raised to the throne by the acclamation of army, Senate, and populace alike. Though still a mere boy[2], he was experienced beyond his years. The affection of the army had marked him out for the Imperial position: though he was too young to take the government at once into his hands, yet his education and his recent part in politics augured well for the future, while the capacity of his mother ensured a strong administration in the intervening years. It remained for the last of the family of Bassianus to repair its damaged prestige.

[1] The narratives of Dio, Herodian and Lampridius cannot be reconciled.

[2] See Appendix II.

CHAPTER III.

ALEXANDER'S COURT AND CHARACTER.

WHAT was the age of Alexander on his elevation to the Principate? The solution of that problem must largely affect our estimate of his position in the early years of his reign. The mind matured at an early age in those days, and so if, as Gibbon and most of the older commentators hold, Alexander was sixteen, he may be said to have attained an age when he could assume an attitude of authority and weight justifying the admiration and affection which we are assured were showered upon him from the date of his proclamation. But if he was thirteen—and the evidence seems to require the acceptance of that view—it is clear that the commencement of the reign was simply a Regency. True enough, monarchs endowed with an extraordinary precocity have from time to time appeared. In England, for instance, Edward VI. talked fluently in Latin at an age when most children have scarcely mastered the use of their native tongue, and at nine he was instructing his sister in moral philosophy. In the same epoch Lady Jane Grey read Plato in the original at thirteen; at the same age Mary Stuart had delivered her first public oration in Latin and Margaret of France had gained a reputation for

scholarship which included philosophy and Hebrew, while Elizabeth of England when but a year older was translating *The Mirror of the Sinful Soul.*

But such precocity, though it is by no means peculiar to the Renaissance period, usually takes a scholastic form, and perhaps should be considerably discounted; with all the attainments of Edward VI. England was after all governed in his reign by a Protectorate. It is in fact impossible to suppose that a mere boy, however advanced in ordinary educational studies, could bear upon his shoulders the weight of administration which often breaks down the strength and experience of age.

The government of the Roman world was a precarious task for any man to undertake, and Alexander at thirteen could not have stood alone in it, however great his general precocity might be. Indeed there is little to show that his powers were exceptionally in advance of his years, for even Lampridius, who clothes his hero with every virtue and every accomplishment, omits to include precocity among his claims to fame. Why then should Alexander have been chosen for the Principate? There were men enough in Rome who were better fitted to attempt the administration and to whom without doubt the offer of the throne would have proved acceptable enough. Ulpian for example had long been a man of prominence, though under Elagabalus he had suffered a temporary eclipse. Among ex-magistrates there were Dio and Maximus, both men of great capacity. Or there was Dexter, or Paulus, and apart from these there doubtless remained a hundred other men who have now sunk more or less into that obscurity which is the lot of all save the highest in this ill-recorded epoch. But these lacked the intangible quality which won confidence and popularity and made men Emperors, and Rome preferred to them a mere boy

belonging to the family which had just brought infamy on the Roman name. Mammaea was of course excluded by reason of her sex. In other countries the choice might well have fallen upon her, but the principle of admitting to the throne a woman debarred by general agreement from the tenure of any other official position,—a principle adopted despite its want of logic in more than one monarchy,—never even occurred to a Roman mind.

Probably four reasons decided Alexander's selection. In the first place, recent events must have struck dismay into the hearts of the citizens. Since the death of the great Antonines, each successive Emperor, save only Septimius, had brought with him new phases and increasing degrees of cruelty or incapacity. The time was ripe for dispensing with an arbitrary tyrant and leaving the government virtually in the hands of a woman whose capability and honesty of purpose had long shone forth against the background of her nephew's iniquity.

Secondly, it seems probable that the selection, unlike the preceding murder, was to some extent the work of the Senate. Though that assembly had been purposely debased and consistently ignored by Septimius, it still retained its old aspirations while shorn of its prestige; it appears to have stepped into the breach made by the assassination, heaping honours and offices on Alexander. Lampridius indeed writes in the first chapters of his biography as if the proclamation of Alexander had been the work entirely of the Senate; but Lampridius writes throughout from the Senatorial and Imperial point of view and there can be no doubt that his statements are biased. Initially the elevation of Alexander was the work of the Praetorians; just as they had championed the city against the excesses of Elagabalus, so they dictated the succession to the Principate: it was from

them without doubt that Alexander received the title of Augustus, in spite of Lampridius' misleading words[1]. None the less it is likely that the Senate lent a ready approval to the choice of the praetorians, which unlike so many of their elections in times past, boded good government and prosperity to Rome.

Moreover Alexander in spite of his tender years had been prominent in politics. His adoption and his title of Caesar tended to mark him out as the coming Emperor, and it is clear that Maesa left no stone unturned to secure his succession in due time. His consulship too was a factor of importance, for though the magistracy had lost all its old significance, the Romans loved the perpetuation of the old offices long after they had lost their constitutional importance, and were willing to hail a consular as a man of dignity.

Above all the fact that Alexander belonged to the family of Bassianus facilitated his elevation. This was one of the epochs, like that of the successors of Augustus, of the Flavians and of the Antonines, when heredity was an important factor in the race for the Principate. Septimius had made it his policy to establish an absolute monarchy and to secure its continuance in his family, and though the fatal animosity of his sons marred his life's work, yet it could not destroy it. There can be no doubt that there was a feeling of loyalty to the reigning family among the soldiers, and even among the citizens, though they had fared ill by Septimius' reforms. Thus it is that the legions in Phoenicia gradually transferred their affections from Macrinus to the priest of the Sun-god, on account, we are expressly told, not merely of the personal attractions of his priesthood, but also of his kinship with Septimius. Thus also on the murder of

[1] *Alex. Sev.* I. 1.

Elagabalus all eyes turned to Alexander. And indeed though the recent Bassianid Emperors had possessed few qualities to endear them to their subjects, yet their immediate relations had been women of high character and ability who adroitly worked on the popular feelings and kept up an undercurrent of affection for the royal house. The adoption of Alexander was largely the work of Maesa who ever clung to the aggrandizement of her family as the dearest object of her heart, and persistently held out the lineage of Alexander as his first claim to the succession.

The selection once made, there was no hesitation in the conferment of honours on the new Emperor. The wealth of titles, the fulsomeness of flattery, with which the thirteen-year-old monarch was hailed, would be almost incredible but for the emptiness of the titles and the multiplication of the honours which each Emperor in turn received and the servile adulation with which he was invariably addressed. A whole meeting of the Senate, says Lampridius, was occupied in conferring the tribunician and proconsular powers, the title of *pater patriae*, and the *ius quintae relationis*, on the new ruler of the world. Of these the two former were indispensable offices of empire, while the title of *pater patriae* was an honour conferred on all Emperors at this time and the *ius relationis* was a right designed to meet the Emperor's convenience in dealing with the Senate[1].

But these were by no means the only titles and powers bestowed on Alexander. It is true that in titles he cannot rival Septimius or Caracalla, of whom the latter, amongst other designations, was once styled Parthicus Maximus Brittanicus Maximus Germanicus Maximus Adiabenicus Maximus[2]. But he was Imperator Augustus by virtue of

[1] See pp. 117 sq.

[2] *C. I. L.* VIII. 10118.

his office, Pontifex Maximus by appointment, Pius, Felix, Invictus, Fortissimus, Maximus, super omnes Indulgentissimus, Princeps Iuventutis, even Divus and Caelo Demissus[1] by courtesy, while the names of the old reigning house,—Marcus Aurelius,—had already fallen to him at the date of his adoption. Nor was this all. On the 6th of March, says Lampridius, doubtless meaning the 6th of March 222[2], the Senate pressed on Alexander the titles of Antoninus and Magnus,—Antoninus the name of the great family which had long been dear to the Roman heart, a name of which the honourable associations had not been forgotten despite its defamation by Pseudantoninus Sardanapalus Elagabalus Tractatitius himself; and Magnus the title of the Macedonian warrior whose name Alexander bore. Alexander's refusal of these titles is strikingly depicted by Lampridius[3] in a passage which he claims to have taken "ex actis urbis"; for once that miserable historian consents to rise above his usual level of idle gossip, and his picture of this meeting of the Senate is worthy of reproduction.

On the 6th of March a crowded meeting of the Senate was held in the Temple of Concord. Though Alexander's presence was requested, he at first refused to attend. In the end however he came to the Senate House. His entrance was the signal for a burst of acclamation. "Augustus the Good, God save your Majesty[4]! Emperor Alexander, God save your Majesty! God has given you to us, God save your Majesty! He has saved you out of the hands of a monster, may he

[1] See Appendix III. [2] See Appendix II.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* 6 sqq.

[4] Di te servent. The term "maiestas tua" had not yet come into use: that was reserved for the age of Constantine. But even in Lampridius we find "tua clementia," though the phrase may well be anachronistic there.

grant you long life! You have felt the tyrant's heavy hand, and yet you would have let him live. Now Heaven has rooted him out and has preserved you. An infamous ruler rightly brought to ruin! Happy are we, happy the state, beneath your rule. He was dragged through the streets: he deserved his punishment! Heaven grant Alexander life! Behold the judgment of Heaven!"

Alexander acknowledged his reception, and the acclamation began anew:—"Antoninus Alexander, God save your Majesty! Antoninus Aurelius, Antoninus Pius, God save your Majesty! We pray you to assume the name of Antoninus. Honour the good Emperors that are gone by taking their name. Hallow the name of Antoninus which Elagabalus defiled. Restore the name of the Antonines. Purge the wrongs of Marcus: purge the wrongs of Bassianus. Worse than Commodus was none but Elagabalus; no Emperor he, no Antonine, no Senator, no Roman. May Antoninus dedicate the temples of the Antonines. May Antoninus defeat the Parthians and Persians[1]. Hallowed, let him take a hallowed name; pure, let him take a name that is pure. May God recognise the name of Antoninus, Heaven keep the honour of the Antonines! Hail, Antoninus, you are all in all."

At this point Alexander was graciously pleased to reply to the theatrical demonstration. "Gentlemen," he

[1] This sentiment sounds at first as though it had been expressed after 233 A.D. in knowledge of Alexander's campaign in the East. In that case it may be an addition by Lampridius, but it must be remembered that the Parthians and Persians were a continual menace to the Eastern frontiers. Septimius was styled Parthicus and Arabicus. Porrath (*Der Kaiser Alex. Sev.* p. 20) appears on account of this reference to date the scene in the Senate after 226, when the Persians first showed signs of active aggression.

said, "I thank you for the name of Caesar and Augustus and for my preservation: I thank you for the pontificate, and the tribunician and proconsular power, which contrary to all precedent you have conferred on me in a single day." No mention of the title of Antoninus. The acclamations began again. "You have assumed these offices: take the name of Antoninus too"; but a reiteration of the previous offer, couched in the same terms as before, did not move Alexander. "Do not drive me, gentlemen," he replied, "into a struggle to act up to so great a name; who would speak of a deaf Cicero, an unlearned Varro, an unjust Metellus? who would tolerate me as an Antonine, if I did not act up to my name?" The Senate were not satisfied, and the Emperor continued in a similar strain. "In your kindness you recall the name,—the hallowed name[1],—of the Antonines. Think you of a holy life; who more holy than Pius? Think you of learning? who more learned than Verus? Of resolution? who more resolute than Bassianus? I do not mention Commodus; his greatest fault was that he lived in wickedness and yet took the name of the Antonines; and Diadumenus died young and had only gained the name by the contrivance of his father." Further acclamation, followed by a further speech, referring to the disgrace which Elagabalus had cast upon the name: the Senatorial applause broke in upon the speaker's words:—"Heaven forbid: with you for Emperor we fear not for this; with you for ruler we have no care. You have conquered vice and crime and shame; you will be an ornament to the name of Antoninus. We see it clearly; from childhood we have esteemed you, and esteem you still."

The Emperor then changed his tactics. "It is not that

[1] There is a play on "nomen" and "numen."

I fear lest I should lapse into vice that would make me blush for my name. I dislike taking the name of a family not my own[1], and I fear it may weigh upon me." Further acclamation. "Well, if I take the name of Antoninus, I might take the name of Trajan or Titus or Vespasian as well." "As you are Augustus, so you are Antoninus." "I see, gentlemen, what moves you to give me this name. Augustus was the first founder of the Principate, and we all step into his name by right of adoption as it were, or of inheritance. The Antonines themselves were called Augusti. The first Antoninus gave his name to Marcus and Verus by right of adoption; Commodus inherited it; it was assumed by Diadumenus and usurped by Bassianus; assumed by me it would be ridiculous." Then the form of the applause changed. "Alexander Augustus, God save your Majesty! What modesty, what forethought, what purity is yours! From this we see your future self and we approve." "I observe, gentlemen," said Alexander, "that I have gained my wish. I thank you and set it to your credit. It shall be my endeavour that my imperial name may testify to your loyalty and be missed by all when I am gone."

Next the Senate pressed the name Magnus upon him[2]. "Alexander Magnus, God save your Majesty! If you have refused the name of Antoninus, at least take the title Magnus. Alexander Magnus, God save your Majesty!" Again Alexander refused. "I could more easily accept the name Antoninus: at least I have some connection with that name: at least I share the Principate with the Antonines. But why should I take the name Magnus? What have I yet done to deserve it?

[1] Alexander did not scruple, however, to claim descent from the Metelli.

[2] Caracalla had had this title. Compare *C. I. L.* VI. 1083, etc.

Alexander only received it after great exploits, Pompeius after great triumphs. Give way then, gentlemen, and count me as one of yourselves—it is honour enough—rather than press such a title upon me." The Senators acquiesced, and the debate ended with cries of "Aurelius Alexander Augustus, God save your Majesty!" The meeting was then dismissed and Alexander retired to his palace in the evening amid a general ovation. By refusing the titles offered to him he had gained far more popularity than he could have won by their acceptance.

Such is the account given by Lampridius of this scene. To modern ears these "acclamationes" sound strange and almost barbarous, yet they were no novelty in Rome. The Romans had no laconic cries such as the English "Hear, hear" or "Hurrah," and from an early date in the Empire the Senate had adopted this ponderous method of saluting their lord. The usage in fact dates back to Republican times when "acclamationes" were heard at festivals, at public assemblies and in the theatre. The rendering of them was a serious affair. It proceeded on fixed lines with a musical cadence under the direction of a master of the ceremonies. We have the authority of Suetonius that Augustus was honoured with an *acclamatio*[1]. Nero made them the subject of his juristic care and at a later date Dio participated in them[2]. So common did they become that the usage lasted for seven centuries after Alexander, and the Church did not disdain to make use of them[3]. But at the same time, if the narrative of Lampridius is an unadorned transcript from the *acta urbis*, the original compiler must have possessed a proper

[1] Revertentem ex provincia modulatis carminibus prosequebantur.

[2] Dio LXXII. 20, *ἐπεβοῶμεν τά τε ἄλλα ὅσα ἐκελευόμεθα.*

[3] Cf. St Augustine. Lett. 213.

appreciation of his obligation to compose a flattering report. The "acclamationes" so exactly set out may well have actually been uttered, but it is hardly to be supposed that Alexander could have responded to them with the appropriate felicity which is ascribed to him.

The feeling of the meeting however is plain enough; probably there was a note of genuine sincerity in the cheers which had been conspicuously lacking in those which had greeted some of the preceding Emperors. But Alexander, while acknowledging the honour done to him, refused to accept titles to which he had no manifest claim. Why should he have done so? It is not for a thirteen-year-old king to weigh the flatteries of a body of old and dignified courtiers. Whatever may have been the exact nature of the debate, whatever the skill of Alexander in its conduct, the influence of Mammaea can be detected working behind the scenes. Mammaea must have known or guessed what the Senate had resolved on, must have seen the opportunity to win popularity by a show of modesty, and have carefully coached Alexander in the part he was to play. It is far more likely that on entering the Senate he delivered a set speech which his mother had prepared, than that he followed in argument the separate outbursts of acclamation which Lampridius so speciously records.

We have little knowledge of Alexander's individual public appearances in the early years of his reign; the main portion of the narrative of Herodian is occupied with an erroneous account of the Persian War, and Lampridius is chiefly concerned with generalised statements and anecdotes which cannot be referred to any specific portion of his career. But in the absence of contrary information it may be assumed that the Emperor was as yet little more than a figure-head serving quite

passively, on account of the goodwill which was bestowed on him, to keep revolution at bay.

In so far as the Roman world now had a ruler, that ruler was Mammaea[1]. Mammaea the Queen Mother guiding and checking her Imperial son, the Imperator Caesar Marcus Aurelius Alexander Severus Pius Felix Invictus Augustus Proconsul Pontifex Maximus Tribuniciae Potestatis Pater Patriae,—her son in fact the scenic representative of despotism. Although the personal history of Mammaea is very imperfectly recorded, it is clear that her influence was at first paramount, and as in the case of Julia a certain glamour surrounded her personality. But unlike Julia her tastes were not literary; she was essentially a stateswoman, and the titles[2] which she acquired show the prominence which she enjoyed in the public eye. At Rome she was *mater augustorum*, *mater senatus*[3], *mater patriae*[4]. In the provinces, where the brilliance of the Roman court shone even more brilliantly in the imagination of its subjects, she became *mater universi generis humani* as well[5]. Such titles are

[1] It may be remarked that many of the coins which are of the most value in confirming the history of the reign are not those of Alexander, but of Alexander and Mammaea combined. This is the case even to the end of the reign. The coin of the year 235 which shows Alexander crossing the Rhine over a bridge of boats, and which refers to his German expedition, bears the legends IMP • ALEXANDER • PIVS • AVG • IVLIA • MAMMAEA • AVG • MATER • AVG • - P • M • TR • P • XIII • COS • III • P • P • (v. Cohen IV. 483).

[2] *v.* Appendix IV.

[3] The title was first borne by Faustina, and then becomes common. Julia for instance was Mater castr. et senatus et patriae (Eckhel, VII. 196). The title Pater Senatus is however avoided by the Emperors as being contrary to the idea of the Dyarchy: it is found only under Commodus and Pupienus. v. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, VII. 493. Faustina also bore the title Mater Castrorum (Dio LXXI. 10), and that title again continually recurs.

[4] *C. I. L.* VI. 31374. Cf. 31372.

[5] *C. I. L.* II. 3413, III. 7970.

indications of the extent of Mammaea's reputation, though it is true that they carry no constitutional significance.

A story arose in later times to the effect that Mammaea while at Antioch in the year 226 accorded an interview to the Christian Origen[1], and it is even affirmed that she was converted to the Christian faith[2]. Mammaea was not in Antioch in 226 and the interview belongs to an earlier period; neither was Mammaea in reality converted to Christianity; but it is undoubted that she took an active interest in the new religion, and the fact that the Fathers claimed her for their own testifies to the nature of her ancient reputation.

If the age which saw Elizabeth and the Queen of Scots and Catherine de' Medici rightly earned the name of the "Age of Women," a similar title might well be applied to the first decade of the third century at Rome. Mammaea was the last of the four great Augustae to whom in succession circumstances had granted a liberal measure of power. After the death of Septimius, Rome was nominally ruled consecutively, save for the brief interlude of Macrinus, by three Bassianid Emperors whose youth and incapacity conspired to leave the real government in other hands: it was the four Augustae who really kept up the continuity of the Phoenician house.

Of these Augustae Julia had been dead some time;

[1] Euseb. *H. E.* VI. 21, Hieronym. *Catal.* 54, Zonaras XII. 15, Vincentius 343.

[2] Syncellus 358 D, *ἡ δὲ αὐτὴ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ὀνομάστοις τηνικαῦτα τῶν Χριστιανῶν διδασκάλοις προσέκειτο διὰ τὴν εἰς Χριστὸν πίστιν.* Cf. Orosius VIII. 18, Mammaea Christiana Originem presbyterum audire curavit. The words *διὰ τὴν εἰς Χριστὸν πίστιν* are slightly ambiguous, but it can hardly be doubted that they are intended to convey a belief in Mammaea's conversion.

Soaemias had just fallen before the swords of the soldiery, and Maesa, who in the reign of Elagabalus had been in the forefront of affairs, quickly followed her grandson to the grave[1]. With the death of Maesa the administration devolved on Mammaea, a woman well fitted to bear the burden of empire. The extant portraits of Mammaea give the impression of stately beauty of a European rather than Asiatic type[2]; the mouth and chin firm and resolute; the eyes penetrating; the neck shapely.

[1] Herod. VI. 1. 4. It is probable that Maesa died early in the reign: she sinks out of notice with the death of Elagabalus. Herodian however seems to put the death later (*ἐπὶ πολὺ δε οὕτω τῆς ἀρχῆς διοικουμένης*). The chronological evidence of inscriptions is inconclusive, for Maesa has few inscriptions and there seem to be none dated later than 222 A.D. She had enjoyed an honourable reputation. Her coins bear the legends "Fecunditas Aug." or "Pudicitia Aug." and in commemoration of her death and official consecration a coin was struck, representing her soul borne upwards on an eagle's wings (Eckhel, VII. 197; cf. Herod. VI. 1). But in inscriptions her title is simply "Julia Maesa Augusta" (*C. I. L.* IX. 790, XII. 2915) or "Julia Maesa Augusta, avia imp. Caesaris" (*C. I. L.* X. 6002), and such titles as Mater castrorum or Mater patriae are not extended to her even in Spain or Asia where these titles reach their fullest length. There is however one Greek coin, issuing from the imperial mint, whereon Maesa is described as ΜΗΤ • ΣΤΡΑ • (i.e. *μήτηρ στρατοπέδων*), v. Eckhel, VII. 267. Muche, in his treatise *De Imp. Severo Alexandro*, appears to hold the view that Maesa's influence up to the date of her death was at least equal to, if not greater than, that of Mammaea. It is however improbable that this was the case. No doubt under Elagabalus she had been very powerful, but Soaemias was almost a nonentity. On the accession of Alexander, Mammaea would naturally take the lead. The nature of the relative inscriptions and coins, and the references of the historians, clearly show that to Mammaea belonged the greater honour. On the other hand that Maesa still retained a fair measure of authority is evidenced by Herodian VI. 1, *παραλαβόντος δὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου, τὸ μὲν σχῆμα καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς βασιλείας ἐκείνῳ περιέκειτο, ἡ μέντοι διοίκησις τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ ἡ τῆς ἀρχῆς οἰκονομία ὑπὸ* **ταῖς γυναιξὶ** *διῳκεῖτο.*

[2] There is also a bust of her in the British Museum (Cat. of Sculpture III. No. 1920, pl. XVIII. Cf. No. 1922. For other portraits, see Bernoulli's *Röm. Ikonographie*, II. 3, p. 108 sqq.). The so-called "Sarco-

There is nothing in these portraits which would suggest flaws of character, but Mammaea has not escaped attack from the historians. While we may dismiss the tale of her intrigue with Caracalla as mere scandal, there remain other charges to consider. Herodian thinks that Mammaea's ascendancy over her son was unwarrantable, that she dominated his actions throughout his life, and finally ruined him by a policy of extortion pursued out of private cupidity. Without doubt Alexander was at first a mere puppet: it could not have been otherwise, and it seems indisputable that there is ground for the charge of avarice: at any rate towards the end of Alexander's reign, when the legions with their accustomed fickleness were casting about for a new leader, a suspicion of Mammaea's love of wealth served to swell the tumult which ended in the Emperor's assassination.

Herodian's attack on this particular fault is bitter. At the beginning of his history of Alexander, while giving Mammaea credit for her jealous guardianship of the young Emperor, he says that he censured her for her avarice[1]. Under the pretence of collecting the means of pacifying the army if need arose, she brought the government into disrepute against the Emperor's will by actual confiscations of estates and inheritances with the covert object of private enrichment. The reputation thus gained remained with her all her life, and even Alexander came to be regarded as *φιλάργυρος*[2], until at last in the final

phagus of the Emperor Alexander," found in Rome at the end of the 16th century, with recumbent figures once supposed to be those of Alexander and Mammaea, is not really Alexander's sarcophagus, though even so recent an author as Duruy (*Hist. of Rome and Rom. People*, Eng. Trans. vi. p. 128, note) ascribes it to him.

[1] Herod. vi. 1. 8, *ἠτιᾶτο δὲ καὶ τὴν μήτερα καὶ πάνυ ἤσχαλλεν, ὁρῶν αὐτὴν οὖσαν φιλοχρήματον καὶ περὶ τοῦτο ὑπερφανῶς ἐσπουδακυῖαν.*

[2] Herod. vi. 9. 4.

mutiny he was termed in the presence of death "a miserly, effeminate craven, tied to his mother's apron strings[1]." Zonaras in his compilation[2] takes up the charge, and even into the Augustan Histories a passage has crept stating that Mammaea was "sancta sed avara et auri et argenti cupida[3]."

Possibly it was an inherited defect. Mammaea was Syrian, and the Syrian Maesa is also said to have amassed great wealth while residing at Rome at the Court of Septimius. But this defect alone will not suffice seriously to stain the enduring reputation Mammaea enjoyed. Herodian makes no specific charge; he cannot recount the details of a single confiscation, nor, had he done so, would the charge have been a weighty one in an age when might was right. Avarice, however, was not the only flaw in Mammaea's character. Possessing opportunities extended to few Roman women in any time, and endowed with most of the virtues and capacities necessary to win universal popularity, she failed at last on account of her proud and overbearing disposition. Rome could endure extortion after centuries of schooling; it could endure arrogance in a native ruler; but the arrogance of a Phoenician and of a Phoenician woman was bound in the end to bring its due reward. Alexander was of a far milder nature: he was ashamed, we are told, of his Syrian origin and tried to conceal it[4]. But Mammaea was ambitious; she would have ruled Rome with a high hand and would brook no rival in the Empire,—not even the Emperor himself[5].

[1] Herod. VI. 9. 5.

[2] Zonaras, XII. 15, *ἥττων δὲ οὖσα χρημάτων ἡ Ἀλεξάνδρου μήτηρ ἐχρηματίζετο παντόθεν.*

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XIV. 7.

[4] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LIV. 3, etc.

[5] Perhaps Mammaea's greatest fault was that she expected and sought

Ambition was the keynote of Mammaea's character. She was of the type which in history wins the title of "The Great" rather than "The Good," but while we regret her shortcomings we may well admire the sagacity and resolution which enabled her to tide over the difficult periods through which she steered the fortunes of her family, and remember how long she retained her life and power in an epoch when Empire seemed to be the harbinger of death. Her high hand is seen in many actions of her life, but in none more conspicuously than in her action towards one of Alexander's wives[1]. Alexander married a lady of Senatorial rank whom he loved and honoured, and Mammaea in her ambitious arrogance, fearing that her position was threatened, treated Alexander's father-in-law with such violence that he fled for refuge to the army. There, while extolling the virtues of the unfortunate Alexander, he complained bitterly of his mother's temper. Mammaea in anger ordered his execution, while his daughter was banished from the palace and compelled to retire to the uncivilised seclusion of Libya. The execution and banishment were carried out at the order of Alexander but against his will: so completely was he under his mother's control[2].

to retain the same influence over her son in his maturer years that she had properly exercised in his youth.

[1] Alexander had three wives according to Zos. L. 11. Lampridius mentions Memmia (Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xx. 3, Uxor Memmia, Sulpicii consularis viri filia, Catuli neptis). Another, Orbiana, is known by coins and inscriptions. (Eckhel, VII. p. 284, *C. I. L.* III. 3734; VIII. 9355; X. 1654.) Of the third nothing is known, and it may well be doubted whether Zosimus is not mistaken.

[2] Herod. VI. 1. 9, *ἠγάγετο δ' αὐτῷ καὶ γυναῖκα τῶν εὐπατριδῶν ἣν συνοικοῦσαν καὶ ἀγαπωμένην μετὰ ταῦτα τῶν βασιλείων ἐδίωξεν. ἐνυβρίζουσά τε καὶ βασίλισσα εἶναι θέλουσα μόνη, φθονοῦσά τε τῆς προσηγορίας ἐκείνῃ, ἐς τοσοῦτον προεχώρησεν ὕβρεως ὡς τὸν πατέρα τῆς κόρης, καίτοι πάνυ τιμώμενον...φυγεῖν ἐς τὸ στρατόπεδον...ἐκείνη δὲ ἀγανακτήσασα αὐτόν τε*

Orbiana, in all probability the woman who thus suf-

ἀναιρεθῆναι ἐκέλευσε καὶ τὴν κόρην ἐκβληθεῖσαν τῶν βασιλείων ἐς Λιβύην ἐφυγάδευσε.

Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLIX. 3, "Dexippus dixit uxorem eum cuiusdam Macrini filiam duxisse eundemque ab eo Caesarem nuncupatum. Verum cum vellet insidiis occidere Alexandrum Macrinus delecta factione et ipsum interemptum et uxorem abiectam." Dio 80. 2 gives the same incident, adding that the wife did not live to be proclaimed Augusta. Who was the wife who suffered thus? Around this question hangs the greatest doubt, and it appears to me that modern criticism has only increased its difficulties. The prevailing view is that it was Orbiana who suffered. Of her it may first be said that between August 225 and August 227 she was Alexander's wife (Sallet, *Daten d. Alex. Kaisermunzen*, 54 sq.). To the same date belong *C. I. L.* x. 1654 and VIII. 9355, Gnea Seia Herennia Sallustia Orbiana coniux nostri Augusti, and a Greek coin cited by Eckhel, VII. 286, Gneia Seia Herennia Sallustia Barbia Orbiana Aug. coniux nostri Aug., and probably the coins cited by Cohen, IV. 479 and 486–8. *C. I. L.* VIII. 15524 contains an African inscription supposed to refer to Alexander and a colleague raised by him to the joint Principate, the colleague being his *father-in-law*: the inscription is dated 224 or 225. Lampridius (*Alex. Sev.* LVIII.) states, "Actae sunt res feliciter...in Illyrico per Varium *Macrinum*." This passage and the preceding inscription have been interpreted by modern scholarship as being connected with the passages first cited in this note, and it may thence be adduced,—

(1) that the daughter of Macrinus, not being Memmia (Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XX. 3), was Orbiana, and that the fuller name of Macrinus was Sallustius Macrinus (*C. I. L.* VIII. 9355).

(2) that Macrinus was raised to be colleague of Alexander (Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLIX. 3, and *C. I. L.* VIII. 15524).

(3) that Macrinus attempted to remove Alexander by a conspiracy (Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLIX. 3), which is again referred to in Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVIII.

(4) that Macrinus and Orbiana suffered by death and banishment respectively for the former's offence (Herod. VI. 1. 9; Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLIX. 3, etc.).

Against these views I would urge the following qualifications—

(1) The passage in Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVIII. in my opinion clearly sets forth the Varius Macrinus there mentioned as the queller, not the leader, of a rebellion (*v.* p. 132); moreover if Orbiana were daughter of a Varius Macrinus we should expect Varia to appear on her coins and inscriptions: that passage should therefore be excluded from the controversy.

fered, is the only one of Alexander's wives who is known to us through coins or inscriptions. The nature of the coins lends colour to the tale of Mammaea's jealousy, for the name of Orbiana is frequently coupled thereon with that of Alexander: and the legend CONCORDIA AVGVSTORVM together with a representation of Alexander and Orbiana joining hands testifies, it would seem, to the high position she held[1]. Orbiana was married at a date not later than 225, and it is supposed by Eckhel that her marriage was the occasion for Alexander's third "Liberalitas" which is assigned to the year 224. Beyond this we know nothing of the history of Orbiana, nor indeed of any of Alexander's wives[2]. A bare reference

(2) The inscription *C. I. L.* VIII. 15524, though claimed by its editor as clearly proving that Alexander had his father-in-law as colleague in the Principate, is obscure: it is not certain that there is a reference to a colleague at all, while the relationship of the supposed colleague to the Emperor is established only by a restoration.

(3) Dio states that the wife who suffered was not made Augusta, whereas Orbiana's coins style her Augusta.

(4) The statement of Lampridius that Macrinus was declared Caesar may only mean that he was declared Alexander's successor, or if it means that he was declared Emperor the episode is perilously like that of Ovinius Camillus (pp. 129 sqq.), which is hardly reliable history.

(5) While Herodian describes the father-in-law as *εὔπατρις*, Lampridius speaks slightingly of him,—"*cuiusdam* Macrini filiam."

Where so much is conflicting and conjectural I should hesitate to pass any decisive judgment, but on the assumption that Alexander had only two wives (and not three) and that Memmia's parentage is correctly given by Lamp., it seems sufficiently clear that it was Orbiana who suffered banishment. Moreover in my opinion it is clear that the rising in Illyricum was *not* the cause of the banishment. More than this, it appears to me, cannot safely be laid down. The date of the banishment must remain conjectural, and the exact position of Orbiana's father is equally difficult to determine.

[1] *v.* Eckhel, VII. pp. 285–6.

[2] It is clear that Orbiana was the more honoured. To Memmia only one coin has been ascribed and that is probably spurious. (Eckhel, VII. 284.)

in Lampridius[1] to the attitude of Memmia towards Alexander's mild and temperate method of government is not illuminating, even if it is authentic. They lived and died and left no trace behind in politics: it is clear that none of them were of that calibre of which Mammaea was made, and in losing their history we lose nothing that we need regret[2].

In accounting for the nobility of Alexander's character and the supposed vigour of his government, Lampridius enumerates with admiration the list of tutors who instructed him in his early years, and the list of friends who guided him in his maturer counsels. How is it, he writes[3], that a Syrian foreigner became so good an Emperor, when so many Romans, so many provincials from other parts of the Empire had been cruel, vicious, and corrupt? Partly it was his nature, partly fear of a fate like that of Elagabalus[4], partly the good guidance of his mother: but above all he was surrounded by a host of friends, noble, capable, venerable, loyal friends, blest with all the virtues and never failing in their duty or allegiance. Here is the constitution of his council as given by Lampridius[5]:—"Fabius Sabinus, a man of distinguished family, the Cato of his time: Domitius Ulpianus, a most learned lawyer: Aelius Gordianus, the son of

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xx. 3.

[2] No mention occurs of any children of Alexander, but it is nowhere stated that he was childless. It is therefore probable—but not certain—that Alexander had no offspring. Soaemias, it will be remembered, had more than one child, though that fact is known only by a chance record in inscriptions.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LXV. 1.

[4] Lampridius scarcely compliments his hero in ascribing his nobility of character to fear of assassination.

[5] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LXVIII. 1. This, the consilium principis, is to be distinguished from the Senatorial Advisory Cabinet which Alexander revived. *v. infra*, p. 110.

Gordianus the Emperor, a man distinguished for his knowledge of the law: Julius Paulus, a most learned lawyer: Claudius Venacus, a noble orator: Catilius Severus, a great scholar and a relation of the last named: Aelius Serenianus, a man most virtuous: Quintilius Marcellus, than whom history records no better." The list of tutors is not much less imposing[1]: his elementary instruction in reading and writing was carried out by Valerius Cordus and Titus Veturius and Aurelius Philippus, the writer of his biography: whilst he was at Emesa (in the reign of Macrinus) his teacher of grammar was the Greek Neho, of oratory Serapio, of philosophy Stilio: at Rome he learnt grammar from Scaurinus, a famous scholar, and oratory from Julius Frontinus, Baebius Macrianus and Julius Granianus, whose works were still known in the days of Lampridius.

Well might the historian add these explanatory glosses. Marcellus, the best man whom history records! Alas, except for the bare record that Marcellus was consul in 226, history is silent alike about Marcellus and about his distinguished brethren whom Lampridius names, save Paulus and Ulpian; for the work of Lampridius does not deserve the name of history, and these worthies find no mention in any other document preserved to us[2]. A tradition of their virtues may have extended to the days of Constantine, but now they have passed out of the page of history, out of the records of mankind, and left nothing but their names behind. Without doubt, as Lampridius

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXXII.

[2] I have not noticed any inscription which has been authenticated as bearing on the men whom Lampridius mentions. There were, however, other men of distinction, such as Modestinus, whose place in the consilium seems to be unknown to the historians. The sophists and rhetoricians of the day, who would act as tutors, were very numerous.

elsewhere contends, Alexander exercised great discrimination in his choice of friends[1] and in the purging of the Imperial service after the orgies of Elagabalus. Without doubt there was no room in the palace for the *roués* and parasites who had disgraced previous reigns. But these seem to have been succeeded by a *régime* of mediocrities: the friends of Alexander, with two exceptions, could not rise to that level of capacity or statesmanship which would give them any claim to posthumous fame. The exceptions were Paulus and Ulpian, and, after all, their claim to immortality lies not in their membership of the Imperial circle, nor in their statesmanship or their influence on the politics of the day, so much as in their stupendous industry in their exposition of the law[2].

Paulus was a lawyer and a most fertile legal writer; he had sat as assessor in the auditorium of Papinian, a lawyer at least as great as he, who met his death in defending the integrity of the law against the attacks of Caracalla. Paulus was a prefect, and as prefect he survived Alexander, but it is not as a prefect that he is known.

Over the head of Paulus, still further over the heads of the little men who shared with him the Emperor's confidence, towers the personality of Ulpian[3]. He too had been assessor under Papinian, and many of his legal

[1] The selection of friends was a question of great importance: *v.* Friedländer, *Moeurs Romaines*, I. p. 128 sqq. For the ancient opinion on this point cf. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LXV. 4, "Notum est illud pietati tuae quod in Mario Maximo legisti, meliorem esse remp. et prope tutiorem in qua princeps malus est, ea, in qua sunt amici principis mali."

[2] Ulpian's work as prefect will be considered later: but it is not comparable to his work as a jurist.

[3] *The Journal of Comparative Jurisprudence* (N.S. XI. p. 14) gives a handy account of Ulpian, which is not, however, always correct.

works had already been completed in the reigns of Septimius and Caracalla. Under Septimius he was a member of the Imperial Council, and under Caracalla Master of the Records[1]. Elagabalus, whose taste was neither legal nor statesmanlike, soon found means to rid himself of so honourable a member of his government, and Ulpian retired into private life[2]. He, however, remained in touch with the royal family. His Oriental origin[3] kept alive his sympathy with the reigning house; indeed it is not improbable that he was a Syrian himself, like Mammaea and Papinian[4]; there was a strong Phoenician element in the leading circles of Roman society at this time[5]. It is not clear whether Ulpian was at Rome throughout the reign of Elagabalus, nor can it be ascertained that he exercised any influence over Alexander in his earliest years; he is not mentioned as a tutor of the young prince, and the absence of such mention is noteworthy, for Lampridius would not have omitted so prominent a name from his list of tutors[6] if he had had any authority for its inclusion.

However in the year 222 Ulpian springs once more into public view. Apparently it was in that year that he was made *praefectus annonae*, and immediately on the accession of Alexander he attained the important and

[1] Magister Scrinii.

[2] Lamp. (*Alex. Sev.* xxvi. 5) speaks of "Paulum et Ulpianum quos praefectos ab Heliogabalo alii dicunt, alii ab ipso." It is unlikely that Ulpian was prefect under Elagabalus. Cf. Dio, lxxx. 1.

[3] *Digest*, l. 15. 1.

[4] Cf. *Journal of Comp. Jurisprudence* (N.S. ix. 19). Papinian seems to have been a native of Emesa and a relation of Julia.

[5] Cf. *C.I.L.* ix. 1538.

[6] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* iii. 2. The passage in li. 4 (Ulpianum pro tutore habuit primum repugnante matre deinde gratias agente) refers evidently to the period after the accession, and "tutor" of course means guardian, not instructor.

responsible post of *praefectus praetorio*[1], and became the young king's guide, philosopher, and friend. As prefect Ulpian was only partially successful, and in the end he met his death on the swords of the soldiers, from whose anger even the prayers of Alexander failed to save him. A man of Ulpian's calibre, stern, strict, and severe in his command, legal in his attitude of mind, and yet it would seem adroit in the arts of the courtier, was not fitted to win the respect of his subordinates: he was strongly opposed to the military caste and supported the attempted curtailment of military privileges. The admixture of flattery with discipline, of indulgence with severity, necessary to humour the overbearing camp, which was recruited now[2] from all parts of the Empire and lacked the spirit of sentimental loyalty, could not issue from such a man, and his murder in 229 was the natural outcome of his career[3]. But during the six years that he held the post of prefect Ulpian was constantly at his master's side and enjoyed to the full the Imperial confidence. In private capacities he was an intimate friend: it is said that Alexander frequently invited him to his table[4], so that he might enjoy the recital of his "fabulae litteratae" which "fed and refreshed" him. In public life he was not only recognised as "iuris peritissimus" but was a "consiliarius" and "magister scrinii." Alexander seldom managed public business by the aid of his unguided intelligence: as we shall see he formed a kind of Advisory Cabinet[5], and before his pronouncement on

[1] Dio, LXXX. 1.

[2] Since Septimius.

[3] Lampridius makes no mention of the murder of Ulpian,—a striking example of his untrustworthiness: an event so little creditable to his hero could find no place in his history.

[4] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXXIV. 6.

[5] A revival of the "Committee of the Senate" founded under Augustus.

any case was made it was worked up for him by his secretaries and by "loyal jurists," of whom Ulpian was the chief[1].

The understanding between Emperor and Minister was complete. Alexander refers to him as "amicus meus," and even as "parens meus." At one time, it seems, Ulpian was one of only two people that the Emperor would receive[2]. He was, as Zosimus says, "a partner in the Imperial power." Great as was Mammaea and numerous as were the lesser friends and servants of the Emperor, the possession of so constant, shrewd, and upright an adviser must be regarded as one of the greatest of the assets of Alexander in the early years of his difficult reign. Had Lampridius mentioned Ulpian alone and omitted reference to the nonentities of the day, we could well have agreed with his words[3]: "At tamen amicos sanctos et venerabiles habuit non malitiosos, non furaces, non factiosos, non callidos, non ad malum consentientes, non bonorum inimicos, non libidinosos, non crudeles, non circumventores sui, non inrisores, non qui illum quasi fatuum circumducerent, sed sanctos venerabiles continentes religiosos, amantes principis sui et qui de illo nec ipsi riderent nec risui esse vellent, qui nihil venderent, nihil mentirentur, nihil fingerent, nunquam deciperent existimationem principis sui sed amarent."

That Alexander stood far in advance of his age in nobility of character, that he profited to the full by the training which Mammaea gave him, that he was assiduous and upright in his discharge of public business, is acknowledged by the general consent of ancient historians. It is however unfortunate that for detailed information of his character and daily life we are dependent almost

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xv. 6.

[2] *Ib.* LXVII. 2.

[3] *ib.* LXVI. 1.

entirely upon the narrative of Lampridius[1]. That narrative is plainly biased. Lampridius was as much concerned to prove the virtues of Alexander as he was to represent the degradation of his predecessor[2]: "Vitam Heliogabali Antonini nunquam in litteras misissem, ne quis fuisse Romanorum principem sciret, nisi ante Caligulas et Nerones et Vitellios hoc idem habuisset imperium. Sed....compensationem sibi lector diligens faciet cum legerit Augustum, Traianum, Vespasianum, Hadrianum, Pium, Titum, Marcum, contra hos prodigiosos tyrannos[3]." The Elagabalus of Lampridius was even more a "prodigiosus tyrannus" than the actual one; his narrative enlarges on the enormities of his character and then insinuates that the worst has been suppressed[4]. The sins of Elagabalus were great enough without such unhistorical exaggeration.

Lampridius must have realised how fine a background his life of Elagabalus made for the eulogy of his hero[5]. But the panegyric, long and laboured as it is, misses fire. We hear little of great reforms of state; much of meditated reforms of dress; little of political qualities; much of the domestic virtues. "He ratified innumerable laws,"

[1] It is of course frequently argued that posterity is not concerned with the private life of an historical personage, except in so far as it affects his public career. That view is argued to the full, for instance, by the apologists of Nelson. And there is much truth in the contention. It is unfair to judge a man at the bar of history by reference to his private life. But at the same time a knowledge of Alexander's character is valuable, if not essential, for the understanding of his statesmanship, and would throw many sidelights on the social life of Rome in his time.

[2] Cf. Lamp. *Elagab.* xxx. 8.

[3] Lamp. *Elagab.* I.

[4] Lamp. *Elagab. ad fin.* "Cum multa improba reticuerim et quae ne dici quidem sine maximo pudore possunt."

[5] Yet the compiler of the Augustan Histories placed the life of Elagabalus before that of Diadumenus.

we are told[1]; yet the nature of the laws, their value and permanence, are not referred to. The attempted military reforms are summarily treated, the great exploits of the Persian War are narrated feebly and briefly, while the meals and the exercises of the Emperor provide an unfailing mine for the historian's explorations. It may be objected with some truth that Lampridius was writing simply a biography, but even granting that, he was an ill-equipped biographer. He knew none of that secret history which sometimes makes an autobiography immortal, opening up the hidden recesses of a human heart. He eschewed the great schemes which were moving in Alexander's mind. He contented himself with a spasmodic and unenlightened discourse on trivialities together with a haphazard essay on his hero's moral qualities. The result is a work for the most part dull and uninstructive, in which a few illuminating paragraphs are inserted accidentally as it were, and without any appreciation of their superior merit.

It is tantalizing to find the longest history of the reign thus failing when it is put to the test. If there were no authorities beyond Herodian and Lampridius from which to draw, the historian would be in sad perplexity. Coins and inscriptions throw much light on the political and external history, but they fail us, from their intrinsic nature, in treating the personal characteristics of the Emperor, and one must be content to take Lampridius on trust for the most part, correcting or confirming his statements where possible by a collation of such pieces of reliable information as remain.

Alexander, we are assured[2], was of a regal presence. He had great, flashing eyes and a penetrating gaze, a manly appearance and the stature and health of a soldier

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLIII. 1. [2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XIV. 6.

who knew his strength and guarded it. Thus far Lampridius, appealing for confirmation to the pictures and statues which still existed in his day. But the practice of idealising the appearance of royalty is not unknown even in these days, and the description given by Lampridius is only partially borne out by the other evidence. The extant portraits[1] are certainly those of a soldier in build. All the Emperors of the family of Bassianus are represented as strong, massively built men, and Alexander is no exception: the thick neck and fine muscular development give the impression of great strength. But the undecided features of the face, the weak mouth and chin, the low forehead half hidden by the hair[2], betoken mild-mannered vacuity rather than manliness, while the eyes, so far from flashing, seem, in the phrase of Duruy, to "stare without seeing." It is the figure neither of a Roman nor of a ruler of men. On the coins the same characteristics are noticeable, save when Alexander is represented as a cavalier thrusting at a fallen foe. On some medallions he makes a fine figure in that guise, but the vigour of the representation is after all due only to the artist's skill.

All the erudition of his tutors failed to make of Alexander a proficient Latin scholar. Though born and bred in Italy, his Latin was not fluent and he had little taste for the language of Rome; his speeches alike in the Senate, before the army, and on the rostrum, are said to have exhibited his failing in this respect[3]. On the other hand he was well acquainted with Greek[4], a language

[1] See Bernoulli, *Röm. Ikonographie*, II. 3, p. 97 sqq.

[2] In the Vatican bust.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* IV. 4–5. The speeches are no longer extant.

[4] *Ib.* XXVII. 5. Alexander's preference for Greek is perhaps a sign of his Syrian origin.

which would supply his ordinary requirements, for Greek was the fashionable language of the day and would be widely used except in formal political discussion. Moreover his want of Latin scholarship was compensated by a brilliant array of heterogeneous accomplishments. He was a minor poet, a musician, a mathematician. In power and knowledge of divination he surpassed the experts of his time. He painted, he sang, he performed on the lyre, the flute, and the pipe, and to the arts of the musician he added those of the wrestler and the warrior[1].

So gifted a youth was clearly born for empire, and indeed long before his accession fate had proclaimed his horoscope by no uncertain indications. Lampridius, after the custom of his day (a custom which better historians[2] also did not disdain to follow), collects a series of omens portending his royal nativity. Above all, like some mediaeval diviner, he essayed the Sortes Vergilianae and forthwith chanced on the famous lines:—

> "Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera.....
> Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;
> Hae tibi erunt artes, pacisque imponere morem,
> Parcere subiectis et debellare superbos."

Truly a plain omen for a half-caste Phoenician!

His Syrian origin seems to have weighed on Alexander's mind. Not only was the Asiatic instinctively despised by the Romans, but it seems that their contempt found open and tasteless expression from time to time. Some provincials at a festival had jestingly dubbed him "High Priest," and "Syrian Leader of the Synagogue[3]."

[1] *Ib.* XXVII. 5–10.

[2] Dio for example. The belief in omens was firmly established in Greece and Rome, and the Imperial Age with its tendency towards the sensational and the mysterious was not one in which the belief would readily die out.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXVIII. 7.

Such references to his connection with a despised race led him to take the trouble of constructing an imaginary Roman lineage. He sketched out a genealogical tree showing his descent from the Metelli[1]. A far better antidote to the disabilities of his birth was found in the absence from his character of any Oriental tastes or proclivities. Alexander had none of that love of seclusion and magnificence which characterised most eastern potentates and which had indeed infected more than one western ruler in the East from the times of Pausanias onwards. He was the essence of kindness and amiability. Ἐς τὸ φιλάνθρωπον καὶ ἐνεργικώτερον ἐπιρρεπής is the judgment of Herodian, and such words carry weight, for Herodian was no slavish admirer of Alexander. He lived on terms of easy familiarity with his friends; he would join them in their banquets or receive them in his palace even without invitation. He indulged in no more ceremony than a Senator; his doors were always open and there were few ushers to bar the way into the Imperial presence[2]. It was the same when he was on campaign. He was continually among his soldiers, working with them, sharing their rough food; his tent was open even at meal-times for the legionaries to see the moderation of the general[3]. Courtiers were treated with the utmost respect; once a courtier always a courtier, might have been his motto,—unless indeed one of his friends showed by his conduct that he was unworthy of the Imperial favour. He expected plain speaking, would listen to all complaints and rectify that which gave just ground for grievance.

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LXIV. 3. Officially, as already pointed out, Alexander was Antonini filius Severi nepos: inscriptions from all parts of the Empire are thus worded with the greatest regularity.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* IV. 3.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LI. 5.

If any of his friends or officials fell sick, be their position high or low, he was forthwith at their bedside[1]. Similarly in the field he would go on a round of inspection and visit every tent[2]. Not a day passed without some kind or thoughtful deed: any act of generosity that his resources would permit was forthwith carried out[3]. He prohibited the use of the title "Dominus[4]," an ill-sounding word in Roman ears, and ordered that he should be addressed in writing as a private citizen, retaining only the title "Imperator" to mark his royalty[5].

Such genuine amiability[6] must have been a revelation to men accustomed to a Septimius or an Elagabalus. Here was a new Cimon keeping open house, a Pericles among his people! But with all his accessibility, Alexander was not to be imposed upon. Though Senators admitted to his presence were not required to stand, and might sit as if in the company of one of their own order[7], it was not every Senator, or every Roman, who had access to the Emperor. The rule of the Eleusinian mysteries was made applicable to the Imperial household: "None but the pure in heart admitted." And so all men of doubtful reputation found themselves excluded on pain

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xx.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* li. 5. For the practice cf. Pliny, *Paneg.* 13.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xx.

[4] So Lampridius, but D.N. (dominus noster) is a title frequently found on inscriptions. It is quite conceivable however that the title (which was first regularly assumed by Septimius and was common afterwards) was unofficially given to Alexander in spite of a definite wish to the contrary. *v. infra*, p. 119.

[5] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* iv. 1.

[6] "Amabilis," says Lampridius, though it sounds like damning with faint praise.

[7] Contrast Capit. *Maximini Duo*, xx. 7, "Nam in salutationibus superbissimus erat (sc. Maximinus Junior) et manum porrigebat et genua sibi osculari patiebatur, nonnunquam etiam pedes," and Juvenal, *passim.*

of death. Flattery again was never tolerated. Adulatory phrases were rewarded by exclusion from the palace, if the station of the offender admitted of such severity, or otherwise by a huge guffaw[1]. But his modesty was counterbalanced by a vein of conceit. Though no great literary scholar, the Emperor was greatly attached to the literary writers of his time[2]: and his love was tempered with a wholesome fear of published criticism. The best writers of the day were carefully instructed by the Emperor in person as to his public and private actions, and requested to immortalise them in their works. Perhaps this was only the spirit of Aristotle's High-minded Man, but the Μεγαλόψυχος is not a pleasing figure in practical politics.

In the years of decline self-denial was as rare a virtue at Rome as it had been common in the epoch of expansion. In Republican times the predominant trait in the national character was that self-denial which made of every citizen a soldier and led him willingly to endure privations and sufferings which can scarcely be realised in thought and are not realised in fact under modern conditions.

It was this self-denying patriotism, this postponement of all other interests to those of the state, which had laid the foundation of Roman ascendancy in Italy and carried the Roman eagles into every region of the civilised world. But even before the establishment of the Empire, Rome had ceased to be a city of soldiers while developing into a turbulent metropolis, and as the years advanced its decadence went on. The soldiers were recruited from the provinces, the city proletariat was lazy and content

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XVIII. 1, "Ridebatur ingenti cachinno."

[2] *Ib.* III. 1. Lampridius never speaks specifically of Alexander's patronage of the arts; but doubtless he posed as a literary patron: it was a well-recognised means of gaining popularity and esteem.

to live on the scanty subsistence that public munificence meted out; while the new nobility, as useless and effete as that which gave rise to the French Revolution, divided its days between the baths, the circus and the banqueting hall. There were of course notable exceptions: many of the old families still retained their simple tastes: many were engaged in art or in administration and avoided the city's attractions. But, in general, frugality was the exception among the rich; gathered together to hang around the Emperor's court, to watch the never ending festivals and games, to seek fortune by short cuts, or to enjoy the pleasures of a city in which industry played a subordinate part, the cosmopolitan population was a population of spendthrifts. The Plinys of the day were outnumbered by the Apicii and the Tigellini, and the spirit of the old Republic was no more.

Hand in hand with luxury went the spirit of selfishness. A society, of which half were slaves, and in which woman had as yet only obtained a partial recognition of her true social status, was ill-fitted to call forth generous instincts. The prevailing air of extravagance and the continuous presence of the military peril swallowed up such liberal impulses as arose. But Alexander was in advance of his age. He was generous, he was self-denying. On this point Lampridius is emphatic, and in the absence of information to the contrary we may accept his testimony as true. There is not however much confirmatory evidence. Some inscriptions refer[1] to municipal restorations carried out by Alexander at his own expense, but the inscriptions in general make few specific references to Alexander's generosity. We must take Lampridius on trust.

[1] E.g. *C. I. L.* x. 5175 (Casinum) and x. 6893 (Praeneste).

The kind of generosity which would most appeal to the Roman world consisted in donatives (free distributions of corn, etc.) and "munera." "Panem et Circenses" was the cry of the populace now, as in the time of Juvenal a century before. Alexander is said to have granted three "congiaria" to his soldiers and three donatives to the populace[1], who also received free meat as well as free corn, apparently for the first time. There was a further project of establishing a new festival of unprecedented magnificence[2] but the idea was abandoned for some reason unknown. If this had been all, Alexander would have had little claim to generosity, for Septimius had treated soldiers and citizens alike with far greater munificence. But Lampridius is chiefly concerned with Alexander's attitude towards the higher orders of society and is at pains to prove his liberality towards his more faithful adherents. Men of high position in financial straits were presented with an estate and stock with which to work it[3]. Ministers of state on their retirement received not only the Emperor's thanks for their public services, but gifts as well to help them to keep up a household befitting their position[4]. But these gifts never took the form of hard cash[5]. He considered it unjust to convert the taxes of the provinces to such a use[6].

Alexander recouped himself for his public munificence by great retrenchments within the palace, which the prodigality of Elagabalus had transformed almost into a

[1] Lamp *Alex. Sev.* xxvi. 1. Alexander's policy towards the people of Rome is discussed below, c. v. It may be observed meanwhile that the coins show that there were five donatives at least, not three.

[2] *Ib.* xliii. 4. [3] *Ib.* xl. 2.

[4] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxxii. 3.

[5] So Lampridius, but "impendiis ad faciendam domum" (xxxii. 3) seems to controvert the assertion.

[6] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxxii. 4.

second Aurea Domus[1]. Expensive ornamentations and sumptuous but useless additions had under him been the order of the day. New and magnificent porticoes, tables cut from a solid block of marble, carriages set with jewels, beds and couches of solid silver[2], did not suffice to satiate his greed for luxury, and the palace came to resemble rather the residence of an Eastern tyrant than that of the ruler of the Roman world.

All this tinsel splendour was abolished by Alexander. He sold the Imperial jewels and handed the purchase money to the public treasury[3]. Jewels given to the Emperor himself or to his wife were sold or presented to the temples[4]. The palace lost its air of ostentatious pomp and retained only so much of luxury as was suitable to the leading citizen of the state[5]. There was also a wholesale reduction of the establishment: the useless functionaries of Elagabalus were discharged, and only so many servants remained as were required for the ordering of the household. The fullers and tailors and barbers and butlers and all the palace servants were relegated to their proper place: their rewards ceased to be positions of public trust and they worked once more for their daily bread[6]. Alexander's whole service of plate never exceeded two hundred pounds weight[7]. Gold was unknown on his table. Public banquets differed from his

[1] Nero's Aurea Domus is said to have been burnt down in the time of Trajan (Orosius, VII. 12; Hieron. *an.* cv. p. 447. The authority is poor enough, but the tradition may be true). A new palace suffered the same fate under Commodus (Dio, LXXII. 24, Herod. I. 14). A further building was subsequently built on the Palatine, and it was this in which Alexander dwelt.

[2] Lamp. *Elagab.* XX. 4, XXVI. 1, XXIX. 1, etc.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XL. 2.

[4] *Ib.* LI. 1–2.

[5] Cf. Herod. VI. 1. 3.

[6] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLI. 3. "Annonae": rations. But presumably the servants (other than slaves) received something more than "board and lodging."

[7] *Ib.* XL. 4, XXXIV. 1.

private meals only in the number of guests, and the size of the company at a banquet offended him[1]. So small was the staff of servants and the supply of plate that on the occasion of a banquet guests would even lend their own[2].

If one could safely take Lampridius at his word, his statements as to the reduction of the household staff would be of great importance. At all times in the Imperial period the danger from the aggrandisement of freedmen holding menial offices was great; though Hadrian had greatly lessened it, it was still there and assumed under Elagabalus the highest proportions. But the evidence of inscriptions tends to throw doubt on the assertion that the purging of the palace was sweeping and complete. The "cursus honorum" of a freedman of Alexander, given in an inscription discovered by Cyriacus of Ancona[3], is distinctly at variance with the view taken

[1] *Ib.* XXXIV. 8.

[2] *Ib.* XL. 1–3.

[3] *C. I. L.* III. 536.

THEOPREPEN·
AVG·LIB·PROC·
DOMINI·N·M·AVR·
SEVERI·ALEXANDRI·
PII·FEL·AVG·
PROVINCIAE·ACHAIAE·
ET·EPIRI·ET·THESSALIAE·
RAT·PVRPVRARVM·
PROC·ABEPHEMERIDE·
PROC·AMANDATIS·PROC·
AT·PRAEDIA·GALLIANA·
PROC·SALTVS·DOMITIANI·
TRICLINIARCHAM·PRAE
POSITVM·AFIBLIS·
PRAEPOSITum ACRY
STALLINIS·HOMINEM·
INCOMPARABILEM·
LYSANDER·AVG·LIB·OFFICI
ALIS·
Ψ·B·

by Lampridius:—it records the career of a freedman who passed through the grades of *praepositus a crystallinis*, and *a fibulis*, tricliniarch,—mere household offices of no high grade,—to be procurator of Imperial domains, and *procurator a mandatis*,—a secretary of the Imperial Cabinet for conveyance of instructions to the Senatorial officers of the provinces,—then a *procurator ab ephemeride* (the *ephemeris* was a form of the *commentarii diurni*), then *rationalis purpurarum*, and finally a procurator of Achaia, Epirus and Thessalia. This is reminiscent of the early Empire when freedmen were at the height of their power. Moreover the inscription shows that the final advancement was reached in the lifetime of Alexander[1]. At the same time such solitary instances as this, while they are suggestive of the inaccuracy of Lampridius' work, need not seriously discount the probability that Alexander did effect radical reforms.

In matters of dress there was the same simplicity as in the arrangement of the household. Alexander did away with the jewels with which Elagabalus had adorned his robes, and wore a white dress without silk embroidery[2]. When in Rome or Italy he wore the toga[3], the official Roman dress, but it can only have been out of loyalty to tradition that he affected so cumbrous and wearying a garment. Other Emperors had assumed the toga praetexta as a symbol of the Principate: Alexander appeared in it only in his capacity of consul or of pontifex. These questions of dress are in themselves of small importance, but they betoken the general trend of his tastes. His accession was the signal for a complete

[1] Cf. Friedländer, *Mœurs Romaines*, I. p. 68 sq.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* IV. 2. The same simplicity characterised the liveries of his servants (*ib.* XXXIV. 5).

[3] *Ib.* XL. 7.

reaction from the senseless luxury of the preceding reign; the splendours of Elagabalus were no longer to be seen.

In the precepts of morality Alexander had been well schooled. Elagabalus had unsuccessfully attempted to seduce him into the luxury surrounding him, but he had been carefully guarded from contamination in his youth, and his strict and puritanical training left its mark throughout his life. In this respect he resembled his mother, who for all her pride and Oriental imperiousness, was yet blameless in her private life[1]. The court of Elagabalus had been stained by the grossest excesses. "Elagabalus," writes Gibbon, "corrupted by his youth, his country, and his fortune, abandoned himself to the grossest pleasures with ungoverned fury, and soon found disgust and satiety in the midst of his enjoyments. The confused multitude of women, of wines and of dishes, and the studied varieties of attitudes and sauces, served to revive his languid appetites. New terms and new inventions in these sciences, the only ones cultivated and patronised by the monarch, signalised his reign, and transmitted his infamy to succeeding times. A capricious prodigality supplied the want of taste and elegance; and whilst Elagabalus lavished away the treasures of his people in the wildest extravagance, his own voice and that of his flatterers applauded a spirit and magnificence unknown to the tameness of his predecessors. To confound the order of seasons and climates, to sport with the passions and prejudices of his subjects, and to subvert every law of nature and decency, were in the number of his most delicious amusements. A long train of concubines, and a rapid succession of wives, among whom was

[1] It is true that Alexander claimed Caracalla as his father, but this need not be regarded as other than a political fiction.

a vestal virgin, were insufficient to satisfy the impotence of his passions. The master of the Roman world affected to copy the dress and manners of the female sex, preferred the distaff to the sceptre, and dishonoured the principal dignities of the Empire by distributing them among his numerous lovers[1]."

The periodical reforms of the court had never been lasting in their results. They could not be so while Emperors possessed of natures so different were elected from a variety of motives in quick succession. And so the enormities of Elagabalus were soon to repeat themselves, though in less degree, under some of his successors. But for a time at any rate there was a complete purification. The dwarfs and monstrosities, the buffoons and dancers, which Elagabalus had collected around him were driven out of the palace and presented to the people for their amusement, or if they were useless for public entertainment they were apportioned out to the various cities to be kept from starvation at the public cost[2]. Eunuchs, the "tertium genus hominum[3]," who had thronged around Elagabalus and usurped a considerable influence in the palace[4], were ruthlessly ejected; none were permitted to wait on the Emperor; a few remained to act as slaves for his wife[5]; a few performed menial functions in the palace[6]; the majority were given as slaves to the Emperor's friends with orders for their execution without trial if they did not reform[7].

The almost ascetic severity of his reforms within the palace was reflected in those without. In matters of

[1] Gibbon (ed. Bury), I. p. 146.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXXIV. 2. [3] *Ib.* XXIII. 7.

[4] *Ib.* XXIII. 6, "Cum plerosque eunuchos rationibus et procurationibus praeposuisset Heliogabalus."

[5] *Ib.* XXIII. 4. [6] *Ib.* XXIII. 5.

[7] *Ib.* XXXIV. 4.

morality Alexander acted with vigour and integrity, though not always with success. His hand was continually raised against corruption and infidelity in the administration of justice and the conduct of the state (his hatred of the unpopular Roman tax collector[1] is a suggestive trait); he was continually attempting the moral reformation of the city; he tried to enforce discipline in the army, gaining, it is said, the name Severus for his pains. But these are matters which call for fuller treatment in the succeeding chapter.

Application to business was still another of the Emperor's characteristics. Laws and edicts emanating from him were prepared with the utmost care in council and expert advice was requisitioned in matters of moment[2]. The industrious habits instilled into Alexander by his mother[3] remained with him all his life, and he would spend a large part of the day in the management of public business[4].

Great men are not without their faults, but the darker side of Alexander's character is carefully suppressed by Lampridius. A passage has indeed crept into his text[5] in which Alexander is said to have been generally blamed for his shame at his Syrian origin, for his avarice, for his suspiciousness, for his introduction of new taxation, for his imitation of Alexander the Great, for his excessive enforcement of military discipline: but this passage, with its heterogeneous display of allegations, which if warranted would severally carry very different weight in an estimate of Alexander's demerits, is doubtless a later interpolation[6].

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLVI. 5. [2] *Ib.* 16. [3] Herod. v. 1. 6.
[4] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXIX. 4, XXXI. 1. [5] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LXIV. 3.
[6] The interpolation may of course have some authority, but the authority is unknown.

It is not pretended that this selection from the details of Lampridius gives any life picture of the Emperor. We know nothing of the development of his character, save that which we can construct from an imperfect knowledge of the development of his policy, and Lampridius provides us at most only with a general appreciation,—inaccurate and doubtless incomplete,—of his moral attributes. But a man is not a collection of moral attributes, and with the best of intentions Lampridius has failed to save the personality of Alexander Severus from passing into some obscurity. We may analyse his character, we may recount his ideals, we may record his actions, we may enumerate the inscriptions set up in his honour, but any picture of the man as he was in flesh and blood is simply a matter of conjecture. Some leave their personality written in the living page: Cicero did, Marcus Aurelius did: others are fortunate in the possession of a biographer who can immortalise them: others, as Cromwell, so stamp their individuality upon the world in which they live that it is preserved in the memories and traditions of contemporaries and posterity. But Alexander was not one of these; perhaps he never analysed his character; perhaps he never understood it; certainly he left no living embodiment of it; its results perhaps were visible in his reforms and in his government, but even of these we now see only shadows; in Lampridius its skeleton alone remains, and who shall make the dry bones live?

Perhaps the most illuminating of the chapters of Lampridius are those in which he attempts to give a journal of the Emperor's daily life[1]. It is certainly only an approximation: even Alexander cannot have spent his life in constant reference to the time table. The early

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXIX—XXXI.

morning hours were usually spent in religious ceremonial in the Lararium, the chapel of the household gods, adorned with busts of the noblest of the Emperors, with statues of Apollonius[1], Christ, Abraham, and Orpheus[2] and of others of like nature, together with the effigies of the Imperial ancestors[3]. Failing this he would fish or hunt, or take a walk, or go abroad in his sedan, as occasion might provide. Afterwards, if time served, he would work at public business, discussing and deciding issues military and civil with the advice of his friends. Sometimes if there were a pressure of business he would start before dawn and work long with unimpaired patience and unruffled temper. After public business he turned to his literary studies; generally he read Greek and especially Plato's *Republic*; sometimes it would be Latin, and then he took up Cicero's *De Officiis* or *De Re Publica*[4], or books of speeches or poetry, above all Horace or Serenus Samonicus[5], a favourite contemporary; a life of Alexander the Great was also often in his hands. After his literary pursuits the Emperor would indulge in the conventional Roman athletics, wrestling, running, playing ball[6], and from his exercises, as was the habit of the day, he would adjourn for an hour to the baths. Then

[1] Apollonius of Tyana.

[2] "Et quantum scriptor suorum temporum dicit Christum, Abraham et Orfeum."

[3] In the same way S. Augustine (*Liber de Haeresibus*, III. 7) speaks of a matron who constructed a miniature chapel in which she burnt incense before the statues of Jesus, Paul, Homer and Pythagoras. Duruy, I. c. vi. p. 297.

[4] The *Republic* of Cicero was held in high repute in ancient times. Its reputation for literary and philosophic value has not been maintained.

[5] He wrote a poem *De Medicina* which is preserved. *v.* Teuffel, ed. 2, II. § 383.

[6] Sfaeristerium.

followed a repast,—strictly vegetarian,—bread and milk and eggs and honey wine[1]. This he would generally supplement with luncheon, unless he dispensed with that meal and waited for the Roman dinner[2]. In the afternoon the Emperor called his secretaries around him, and devoted himself to reading and signing letters, adding or emending with the advice and concurrence of his most trusted subordinates[3]. On the conclusion of such business the palace was thrown open to the Emperor's friends, and he engaged in conversation and entertainment for the rest of the evening.

That was a well planned day; the arduous duties of administration divided into two portions, and the interval occupied with relaxation for the body and the mind; no time left to be wasted, as other Emperors had wasted it, in the luxurious and profligate pursuits of the great city; and an ample opportunity provided for interviews and social meetings which would go far to keep the Emperor in touch with his people and to appease the murmurs of envy and discontent at any rate in the higher ranks of society. And the account has the impress of reality. An Emperor, if somewhat effeminate, at any rate frugal, conscientious and severe, would naturally live his life in such a way.

But Lampridius is not content with this general sketch; it is supplemented by many minute details. We are honoured with a statement of the quantity of wine, of "panis mundus," of "panis sequens," which the Em-

[1] Mulsum.

[2] The Cena was taken at this time at about 3 o'clock. One of Alexander's favourite dishes was the Tetrapharmacum Hadriani, of which we know no more than the name discloses.

[3] Imperial Rescripts, etc., would occupy very much time under a conscientious Emperor. Their number and importance are evidenced in the works of the jurists and in the Digest.

peror was pleased to regard as sufficient for a meal; of the days on which he partook of poultry, of goose, of pheasant, and of hare; of the character of his dessert, of his predilection for starch and pepper, of his desire to reform the current styles of dress, of his establishment of imperial aviaries, and of his delight in watching pheasants fighting or a puppy playing with a sucking pig[1]. Such information will add little to the history of the period, less to our estimate of Alexander's character, and therein we will not encroach on Lampridius' copyright.

A review of all the characteristics which Lampridius records cannot lead us to the conclusion which he deduces from them. These are not the attributes of genius; the impression left is rather that of the apotheosis of the commonplace. If genius were really the infinite capacity for taking pains, then Alexander might well be claimed as one of the world's geniuses: but that definition, by common agreement, falls, and Alexander's claim falls with it. The picture is that of ineffectual enthusiasm, of painstaking and sincere industry, placed in a position calling for other higher and rarer qualities as well as these. Alexander lacked any characteristics that stir the emotions. At the name of Marcus Aurelius we think of the Philosopher King whose *Meditations* have served as a hand-book to life for many a monarch in after ages; at the mention of Septimius we are carried back to great enterprises in war, and to an attempt at a political revolution which might have changed the face of the

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXXVII.–XXXIX., XXVII. 1, XLI. 5, XLI. 7. Lampridius was put into possession of these facts and of many others of similar character which he fortunately omitted, by "Gargilius, eius temporis scriptor," probably the G. Martialis Gargilius of Mauretania who wrote on husbandry and the medicinal employment of rural products, of whose work part is extant in the so-called 4th book of the *Medicina Plinii*. (*v.* Teuffel, ed. 2, II. § 380.)

Roman world; at the mention of Elagabalus we recoil from moral enormities which surpass the imagination. But the name of Alexander has no such associations; the vast majority of men in modern times have never heard of him, and those who have are inspired by little enthusiasm for his history.

The truth is that as the one virtuous and sincere monarch in a period of insincerity or vice, Alexander, singled out for panegyrics more flattering than he deserved, was long regarded as a paragon. But in the light of more exact criticism, though we may still feel "an attachment for this amiable prince who wished the public crier to proclaim, while criminals were being chastised, those words graven on the front of his palace, 'Do not to another what thou wouldest not have done to thyself[1],' who wrote in verse the lives of the great princes, and each day went into his Lararium to pass some moments before the images of those whom he called the benefactors of humanity, princes and philosophers, founders of empires and religions[2]," we are still inclined to discount the efficacy of his aspirations to benefit the discordant and decadent world which it was his misfortune to be called upon to govern, and to demur to the biographer's assumption that a well-conducted and well-meaning ruler is entitled to political immortality, if those qualities constitute his sole claim to the distinction.

One may not however judge Alexander simply by his history as recorded in the old narratives. Grant that in many ways his character betokens good intentions rather

[1] This injunction was known long before the Christian era. The positive commandment enunciated in the Gospels is an expansion of this negative form which Hillel (president of the Sanhedrim when Christ was born) declared to be "the whole Law."

[2] Duruy, c. vi. p. 294.

than strength, the careful education of ordinary capacities and qualities rather than the possession of exceptional abilities; it still will not necessarily follow that his rule was either a failure or a success. Septimius had created a military monarchy which since his death had become unmanageable; could ordinary abilities by tact and application stay the onward course and avert for a time the march of events towards the inevitable culmination under Diocletian? It is not impossible that a man with the characteristics of Alexander might have succeeded in such a task, and it is clearly on his success or failure in this that his political reputation must be judged. But it is just at this point, at the beginning of the real inquest, that the old historians ring down the curtain, and leave us to form our conclusions from fragmentary evidence. It is as though Lampridius had conspired with his fellow writers to draw a veil over the actual results of his hero's statesmanship, for such political history as we can now construct will not be found to justify his estimate of Alexander's greatness.

CHAPTER IV.

SENATE AND ARMY.

THE English constitution, that "incongruous jumble of sagacious anomalies," has been compared to an old country house, changed out of all liking by alterations and additions to suit the needs of modern times. The comparison is apt enough. The present constitution possesses all the associations of antiquity and in theory remains almost unchanged from the days of the Conqueror, yet in practical working its difference from the constitution of Norman times is the difference between pure monarchy and modern democracy. Theoretically absolute, the monarchy has become constitutional; the theoretical lawgiver has handed his functions to the Parliament; the theoretical judge has handed his functions to the Bench; the theoretical minister has handed his functions to other ministers, whose powers, like the authority of Parliament, have in turn been largely usurped by a composite body, the Cabinet, which in theory does not exist; while the antithesis between theory and fact is completed by the development of the principle of responsibility to the people rather than to the Sovereign. The conventions of the constitution have been the means of the gradual and silent adaptation of that form of

government which is suited to a medieval state into that which the process of civilisation has evolved as the natural form of government for modern Western powers.

Between this development and the development of the Roman constitution there is a resemblance and a difference. The constitution of the Empire was as much a constitution of conventions as the English democracy. The settlement of Augustus was a compromise, an adaptation of old forms and old associations to new methods and new requirements. The combination Augustus Princeps—Senatus Populusque Romanus is but the combination République Française—Napoléon Empereur in another guise[1]. In theory the Principate was "but one magistracy the more." It violated no Republican principles, it created no new powers, it gave no unprecedented *imperium*, in the form it assumed in 23 B.C. it even involved the sacrifice of powers which Republican institutions had conferred on their Republican holder. In theory it made no Emperor, but upheld the power of the Senate and the magistracies, the two great bulwarks of Republican Rome. But in practice it was subversive of the old principles of government. It swept away the sovereignty of the people and ended their meetings in the *comitia*. The Dyarchy which it substituted was scarcely more than a Dyarchy in name; the Senate soon became the sleeping partner in the dual government and, the practical power lying with the Emperor, the history of the constitution is merely that of the gradual change from nominal Dyarchy to actual monarchy, a change which it was the work of but a few generations to effect. The Dyarchy was in fact as transparent a fiction as any English constitutional convention, and the real meaning of the Principate lies not in the ingenious compromise

[1] Cf. Appian, *Praefat.*

of Augustus, but in the number and nature of his magistracies and in his command of the army. Emperor and army,—that is the Principate. So long as an Emperor governed well and respected the position and reputed functions of the Senate, the Dyarchy flourished. So soon as the Emperor chose to humiliate his partners in the administration, the Senate sank into impotence and insignificance. "In the darkest hours of tyranny and oppression, even while the fiction of the Dyarchy was still maintained and the constitution of Augustus was in theory unimpaired, the voice of protest came, not from the equal partner in the government of the Empire, but from individual senators who had learned the conception of duty in the school of the Stoics and who were eager in the cause of freedom to win the crown of martyrdom[1]."

It is in this divergence of theory and practice that the analogy between the English and the Roman government lies. The difference may be found partly in the opposite tendency of the changes, from democracy to monarchy in Rome, from monarchy to democracy in England; partly in the abruptness of the Roman transition; still more in the epoch at which the change took place, the epoch of growth in England, the epoch of decline in Rome. In the Republic the Roman constitution was that of a city state, and when Rome outgrew its city boundaries and developed into an empire, the city-state government gave way; the form of constitution has much to do with the anarchy and chaos in the period of pseudo-democratic aristocracy which guided in the later years the Republic to its fall. The task of Augustus, though perhaps he knew it not, was to evolve a government which could regulate a declining state; and in choosing a monarchic form he commenced to forge the fetters of tyranny which were

[1] Taylor, *Constitutional and Political History of Rome*, p. 474.

soon to fasten upon Rome, and which indeed no human effort could have prevented from binding the state sooner or later, even had Augustus proceeded on different lines. After Augustus the Emperors worked their will untrammelled by the nominal methods of administration. To Nero, to Caligula, the constitution was nothing; perhaps it was on this account that they introduced no new principle into the Dyarchy. That remained for Domitian, who carried the work of Augustus a step further in the direction of monarchy. The Senate was naturally filled, partly by the Imperial privilege of *adlectio*, chiefly by the automatic action of the system under which the quaestorship carried the Senatorial dignity. But this did not necessarily render the office of censor nugatory, although it was almost superfluous. The work of Domitian was to assign the functions of the censorship to the Principate; and thus without altering any constitutional form, he put a new complexion upon the Imperial position. Till his time the censorship had been allowed for the most part to lapse in order to grant a greater semblance of liberty to the Senate, but Domitian was an autocrat and the assumption of the censorship was his declaration of a policy of Senatorial oppression: it was the symbol of complete control over the Senate.

The divorce of theory from practice in the Imperial constitution accounts for the slight changes in the administrative system which were effected during the first two centuries of its existence. At the close of the Antonine period the Emperor has new prerogatives, of which the chief is the function of censor; he has an enlarged competence in Rome and Italy, the number of his provinces is increased by the addition of newly acquired territory, and he has learnt to exercise to some extent his *imperium proconsulare maius* in the Senatorial

provinces[1]. These were all the changes, and they were changes in the balance of power rather than in constitutional form; yet they constitute but an imperfect guide to the actual trend of Roman politics. Say what one will[2], Rome had passed its political zenith; the settlement of Augustus was at once a half-unconscious admission of the existence of a new era, and the beginning of a political decline. Despite the attempted reactions of the age of the Antonines, despite the attachment of Marcus to the associations of antiquity, Rome in the first two centuries was marching onwards to the goal reached under Diocletian. A perusal of the history shows but a growing inability for self-government and a growing attachment to the monarchy, continuously aided by the attitude of the provincials, who, free from the associations of the past, had always proclaimed their adherence to the Imperial system without reserve.

Nor can the settlement of Diocletian be well regarded as unsatisfactory. The best government of one age and of one state is not necessarily applicable to a different nation in a different epoch, and if one may regret the fall of institutions and methods which had served to produce a great world-state and to guide a great Republic through a glorious career, it is still to be remembered that those methods and institutions must in the end decay and give place to new. "The old order changeth," and under the Empire the time of the Senate and the popular assemblies was no more. The population of Rome from causes scarcely controllable had ceased to be capable of political initiative; Italy was from its nature unable to take its place; the provinces though composed largely of self-governing

[1] Bury, *Student's Roman Empire*, p. 563.

[2] Duruy for example, in his *History of Rome and the Roman People*, is inclined to contest the view of the decadence of Imperial Rome.

units lacked such homogeneity and assimilation to each other and to the metropolis as could enable them to be active participants in the government. Monarchy remained, and militarism, then as ever, was the danger of the state. In modern eyes, it is true, the idea of monarchy as the salve of political ills is repugnant. But we are too apt to judge from a latter-day standpoint. In the Roman state of the second and third centuries one looks in vain for the features which would render democracy or even aristocracy feasible. The real alternative was monarchy or anarchy.

If this view of the tendency of politics in the Imperial epoch be justified, it follows that an attempt to stem the tide and to return to the settlement of Augustus or to earlier constitutional principles would be an unjustifiable and short-sighted policy, unless means could be found of effectually establishing the permanence and efficiency of the innovation, while a monarchic policy safeguarded against the dangers of military domination might prove provident and beneficial. The first was in the main the policy of Alexander; the second that of Septimius; but neither took steps to avoid the dangers to which their policies were exposed. Septimius pampered the army and left it undisciplined and ready for conspiracy; Alexander sought to establish a "Senatsherrschaft," but failed to fortify that form of government in its most vulnerable points.

In order to understand fully the policy of Alexander, it is necessary briefly to consider that of Septimius, for, be our judgement on that ruler favourable or not, it must be admitted that his influence on Roman history was profound; it was largely with problems which Septimius had raised that Alexander was called upon to deal. The policy of Septimius falls into two periods,—the preparatory

attitude of conciliation while his tenure of the throne was as yet insecure, and the later autocratic attitude of a man intolerant of Republican institutions and of the Senate above all, determined to consolidate his power by the support of his victorious army, aiming in fact at an autocracy. This second policy, which is the true policy of Septimius, has often won the eulogy of his historians; and yet when we regard the melancholy history of the succeeding reigns it is difficult to see how that eulogy is justified. The reigns of Macrinus and Elagabalus, to some extent that of Caracalla also, exemplify the inevitable result of the shortcomings of their great predecessor.

In the policy of Septimius there are three easily discernible schemes all conducing to one end. He worked to win the favour of the city population and the attachment of the provinces. He treated the Senate with contempt, ousting it from its share in the government. He elevated the position of the army and its officers. In fact he humbled the weak, and courted and pampered the relatively strong. To his attitude towards the city and the provinces a fuller reference will be necessary at a later stage[1]. He satisfied the appetite of the urban population with doles, its vanity with flattery, its love of pleasure with spectacles and games to an extent and on a scale unprecedented in the previous history; yet he still contrived by careful finance to refill the granaries which Commodus had depleted and to leave a rich legacy of supplies to his successors; while, in the provinces, by diligent supervision of the administration and by care in the selection of the ministers who held his delegated power, he contrived to inaugurate a period of considerable prosperity and possibly of affluence. The result was that Septimius in all his difficulties continually had the city

[1] See pp. 150 sqq.

and the provinces on his side; no age is richer than the age of Septimius in monuments attesting the virtues of the Emperor and the honour and affection in which he was held.

In his treatment of the Senate lies the other side of Septimius' character. He was no man to engage continually in the arts of flattery and indulgence. As the result partly of his ambitious nature, partly perhaps of the great contests of his youth, he must continually be striving with some adversary, however unworthy of his steel. So when the last of his military rivals had disappeared from the field, Septimius found his new foe in the Senate. He reduced that body to a depth of political impotence to which it had never before sunk. In order to rob it of its claim to represent the old traditions of Rome and to contain within its walls the blood of the Roman aristocracy, he broadened its membership; the gates of the Senate were thrown open to his followers from the East; even an Egyptian took his seat by the side of the Metelli[1]: Senatorial functions were usurped by knights,—an innovation of which the importance is apparent when it is remembered that the equestrian order formed the backbone of the permanent Imperial administration. The Imperial officers were ennobled and the Senatorial magistrates belittled. The deliberative functions of the Senate were almost suppressed; the Emperor attended to receive its homage, never its advice.

The Dyarchy was in abeyance, and people and provinces acquiesced. The dream of monarchy was realised. But Septimius was not content with this. A born general forced by circumstances into a long and strenuous military career, he saw his goal less perhaps in secure monarchy than in the aggrandizement of the army which had served

[1] An Egyptian by name Coeranus was admitted. Dio, LXXVI. 5.

him so well. Moreover his campaigns and his march on Rome had roused the soldiers, and above all the praetorians, from the indolence of past years, and had made them formidable. It was no time to forget the claims which the army had upon him. Consequently the army was treated with an indulgence which it had never experienced before; Ἄγετε δότε, εἴ τι πρᾶξαι ἔχομεν[1]—words spoken by Septimius on his death-bed to his sons,—fitly sum up his attitude. The soldiers were paid on an increased scale, while the frequent donatives assumed enormous dimensions[2]. Privileges also were extended to them: sixteen *vigiles* for example in the year 203 record their gratitude to Septimius and his sons for the grant of the *ius quiritium* and consequently of a share in the corn distributions, a grant made to some after three, to others after four years of service[3]. The satisfaction of the army at such generosity is evidenced by the inscriptions raised thereby in honour of Septimius and his sons, inscriptions far more numerous than those in honour of any other Emperor. In Rome alone the *equites singulares*, the *vigiles*, the praetorians and the Legio Parthica II. have left not less than eighteen[4].

But Septimius was not merely concerned to keep the army content: he effected radical changes in its position. It was the praetorians who had sold the empire to Julian, and it was the praetorians who felt the hard hand of the conqueror when Septimius marched on Rome. But his

[1] Dio, LXXVI. *ad fin.*

[2] Spart. *Severus*, XII. 2, "Denique militibus tantum stipendiorum quantum nemo principum dedit." *Ib.* XVI. 5, "Donativum militibus largissimum dedit concessa omni praeda oppidi Parthici, quod milites quaerebant." Cf. Ceuleneer, *Vie de Sévère*, p. 153.

[3] *C. I. L.* VI. 220.

[4] *C. I. L.* VI. 3761. 224; VII. 3768. 218. 2385. 354. 210. 1060. 643. 1055–9. 340, cited by Ceuleneer, pp. 171 sq.

contemptuous dismissal of the effeminate and unwarlike troops who had had their station in the city was not the signal for the emancipation of Italy from the military peril. It marked rather the inception of an age of army domination. The old praetorians were dismissed only to be supplanted by a new legion,—the Legio Parthica II.[1], —stationed at Alba[2], and by a new praetorian guard stationed as before at Rome. The change was revolutionary. Hitherto Italy had enjoyed a favoured position. Troops indeed it had long had within its frontiers, but the troops were not legionaries recruited from the provinces at large. The praetorians had been recruited chiefly from Italy[3], partly from Noricum[4], Macedonia[4] and Spain[5], provinces completely Romanised[6]. Italy was thus favourably differentiated from the provinces. The centre of the Empire, it was freed from the quartering of soldiers engaged for the defence of the frontiers, and the intimidation of barbarians. But to Septimius, accustomed as he was to war and legionaries, associated rather with the provinces than with Rome, intimately connected with the nations and traditions of the East, the claims of Italy did not appeal: it was as fit a subject for legionary lordship as was Syria or Dacia itself, while as the centre of the administration Rome required military support. So not only did the legions come to Rome but even the new praetorians were legionaries. Septimius abolished the old system of recruiting, and drafted men from the regular

[1] Dio, LV. 24, Σεουῆρος τὰ Παρθικά...τὸ δεύτερον τὸ ἐν τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ.

[2] It remained at Alba till the time of Diocletian.

[3] Tac. *Ann.* IV. 5.

[4] Renier, *I. A.* 3935.

[5] Tac. *Ann.* V. 5. Dio, LXXIV. 2. 4.

[6] Cf. Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, p. 203. There were some exceptions to the old rule, and men of other provinces are occasionally found in the guard: cf. *C. I. L.* VI. 2725.

army into the praetorian guard; henceforward the reward of faithful service in the provinces was a transfer into Rome[1].

Italy therefore lost its privileged position and the army was paramount there as elsewhere. It was a great step in the assimilation of the Empire, but an assimilation of Italy to the provinces rather than an assimilation of the provinces to Italy. As Schiller[2] has observed, in the introduction of foreign soldiers to Rome we may almost see the foundation of the decline into the Dark Ages. What shall we say of this policy of Septimius? He had deliberately undone the work of the Antonine reaction. He had deliberately swept away the settlement of Augustus. He had deliberately brought the army into Italy, and founded his power on the attachment of the army to the Crown. Clearly in military rule there lay a hope of safety where other means had failed to stay the decline of a dissolving society; but clearly in military rule lay Italy's greatest peril. What was the army which Septimius had introduced? It was not the old praetorian body, often unruly it is true, but more often indolent and luxurious and incapable of campaign and policy alike. Nor was it the soldiery of the preceding century. By his wars he had roused the army from its lethargy; if he could add discipline to strength, all might be well, but if strength became the plea of insubordination, the last state of Rome was worse than the first. It is on the question of discipline that the policy of Septimius is wrecked. Duruy, it is true, has attempted to make out a case for him, and it is not difficult to find isolated instances of severity and strength. We are told that he gave as a motto to a military tribune the watch-word "Laboremus," which has been adopted

[1] Cf. Marquardt, l.c. p. 204.

[2] Schiller, *Ges. d. Rom. Kaiserzeit*, I. p. 840.

frequently enough in after ages[1]. He sentenced to banishment a deserter who returned to service after five years' absence[2]. It was not to be expected that Severus would allow the same liberties to continue which Commodus had overlooked. But if he effected some reorganisation[3], it is none the less true that he corrupted the army by granting largesses and privileges, and by treating it with a consideration which by the legionaries could only be interpreted as fear. The seed of militarism was sown and the harvest was soon to follow[4]. Henceforward the military peril frowns upon the provinces and Rome alike. Caracalla, Macrinus, Elagabalus fell in quick succession before the army, which took upon itself the choice of rulers and their removal when their popularity had run its course. On the accession of Alexander, the Senate hastened to heap honours and offices upon him, in order to forestall any schemes the army might propound[5]. Futile policy! Had the army so desired it would have laughed at the empty decrees of a body now despised. After the fall of Alexander, Rome is once more plunged into the agony of a series of succession wars, in which the army is continually the vital force.

It was at such a juncture that Alexander was raised to the throne. The army had been brought into Italy, the monarchy had become military, the Dyarchy had gone, the provincialisation of Italy had proceeded for a period of years. What was his policy to be? He was possessed of popularity and sage advisers: despite his youth, Alexander was as well placed as any to define and carry out a policy

[1] Spart. *Severus*, XXIII. 4. [2] Digest, 49. 16. 15. 6.

[3] Cf. Treb. Poll. *Trig. Tyr.* 5.

[4] Much the same train had been laid in the years 68–9 A.D., but the consequences were then averted.

[5] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* I.

which should leave its mark in history. In view of the character which we have seen to be his, we must expect honest endeavour and sincerity of purpose in his administration. If he accepted the policy of Septimius, it was clearly for him to leave the status quo untouched, sternly to reduce the past insubordination, and to weld the army into a well-disciplined and well-led force. Or if he felt that Septimius had not grasped the true destiny of Rome, and therefore reverted to the settlement of Augustus, it was for him to lead back the army into the provinces, to leave the administration unencumbered, and to hand over to the Senate the position which it still could occupy under an Emperor who wished it well.

Neither policy was easy, but of the two the second was by far the harder. To enforce discipline in a disorderly army looking back on thirty years of insubordination was no weakling's task. To deprive the army of the position it had won, to deprive the legionary of his hope of higher pay and less exacting service in the metropolis, was a work almost beyond accomplishment. But Alexander adhered to neither policy, and his advisers had neither the foresight to see that the settlement of Septimius had only brought nearer the inevitable end of Roman politics, nor the will to reverse a settlement which was liked as little as it was understood. Alexander looked back with admiration upon the days of Augustus, and wavered. He would restore the Dyarchy and yet leave the army in Italy. A renewed "Senatsherrschaft" in the Capitol, and a legion at the walls of Rome; such was the policy which Alexander pursued, and pursued in the face of the established fact that the army was the Emperor's, was attached to the Emperor, made and unmade the Emperor, and hated the Senate whose perpetuity no temporary revolution could overthrow. It was a weak policy, an expression of dissatis-

faction coupled with an admission of inability to effect a fundamental change; regarded in the light of later history and the Roman records as a whole, it was an ineffectual struggle against an onflowing tide. When it is remembered that a return to the Dyarchy was plainly the ostensible policy of Alexander, and that his reign is marked by many military risings, some of them apparently of considerable magnitude, the stern discipline which he is said to have enforced becomes more problematical. Certainly he was sterner than Septimius, and may well have been anxious to introduce a new era in army organisation, but the army would be little willing to listen to the demands of a ruler who proceeded in his main policy by half measures, and the episodes of Dio and Ulpian may be taken as indications of the want of permanence in his reforms. Even had he succeeded in enforcing discipline, his work would have been incomplete. To leave the army in Italy and yet to re-establish the Dyarchy was but to mate fire with water. There could be no permanence in such measures. With his death, the policy of Alexander fell instantly to the ground.

The main lines of Alexander's policy are indeed well known, and it needs no great perspicuity to see where they must lead. It remains to trace in greater detail the methods by which he sought to attain his half-hearted aims.

Alexander was ever painstaking in military affairs[1], often seeking expert advice in their management. Rather than trust to his own wisdom, he had recourse to a council composed of military experts and historians, men who had seen long and faithful service and knew the provinces and the methods of war, or men who could advise what strategy

[1] It is noteworthy that he attached the greatest importance to secrecy in military movements. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLV. 2.

the generals of ancient times and foreign countries had adopted in contingencies similar to those which from time to time arose[1]. In this curious combination of experts one sees the practical nature of Alexander blended with his reverence for the past; how historians and military experts were to agree upon a policy is difficult to understand; but without doubt in view of his own inexperience he did well to take the opinions of the authorities of the day.

It was not merely in policy that Alexander exercised such care. He was solicitous for the welfare of his soldiers individually. He would supervise their supplies[2]. He would visit the sick in their tents[3]. He would quarter the invalided on the citizens of Italy[4]. He kept the roll of the army continually by him, and supervised and registered promotions[5]. Twice he resorted to the system of donatives which Septimius had abused, but only twice, and then when in the throes of the Persian war[6]. Yet he too subscribed to some extent to the motto Ἄγετε δότε of Septimius. "The soldier has no fear," he said, "except when clothed and armed and well-fed, and with money in his purse[7]." The concluding words of Herodian, "having reigned without blame and without bloodshed[8]," apply no less to his management of the army than to his civil administration. But Alexander did not kill with kindness: on the contrary he is credited by the historians with a

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XVI. 3.
[2] *Ib.* XV. 5.
[3] *Ib.* XLVII. 2.
[4] *Ib.* XLVII. 3.
[5] *Ib.* XXI. 6–8.
[6] Herodian, VI. 4. 1, and VI. 6. 4.
[7] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LII. 3. Cf. Herodian, VI. 6. 4, *τοῦτο γὰρ* (sc. *μεγαλοδωρίᾳ χρημάτων παραμυθεῖσθαι*) *μόνον ἐς εὐνοίας ἀνάκτησιν στρατιωτῶν ἐνόμιζε φάρμακον.*
[8] Herodian, VI. 9. 8.

stern sense of discipline[1]. Lampridius, ever ready to support a view by the most meagre of historical evidence, states that fact and appeals in proof to the Emperor's name[2]. The name Severus originated in the army and testified to its sense of his disciplinary power. So the *severitas* of Alexander is a theme to which Lampridius continually recurs[3], and the echo is taken up from him by Eutropius[4]. An easy statement easily disproved! The name Severus dates at least from Alexander's accession[5] and was his long before the army could have experienced his heavy hand: it is clearly derived from Alexander's official relation to Septimius.

None the less, details of his alleged *severitas* have been recorded. Now an officer, now a legionary it was who suffered. Military tribunes, tried and convicted on the evidence of a private soldier, received adequate punishment without the hope of a reprieve[6]. Tribunes who abused their privilege of *stellatura*, their right of making a deduction from the soldiers' rations, were visited with the penalty of death[7]. Towards the legionaries in general Alexander's recorded severity is summed up in the statement that he dismissed whole legions for insub-

[1] One may perhaps compare in confirmation the coins bearing the legend ALEXANDER · AUG · † · ADLOCVTIO · AVGVSTI, and representing the Emperor addressing three soldiers. Cohen, IV. p. 402, Nos. 3–7.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XII. 5, cf. XXV. 2, "Nam et Severus appellatus a militibus ob austeritatem et in animadversibus asperior in quibusdam fuit."

[3] Cf. *ib.* LII. 3, LIII. 1.

[4] "Militarem disciplinam severissime rexit," Eutrop. VIII. 23.

[5] Cf. Cohen, IV. p. 401.

[6] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXIII. 1, "Pro facti qualitate, sine indulgentiae proposito."

[7] *Ib.* XV. 5. Tribunos, qui per stellaturas aliquid militibus tulissent, capitali poena adfecit.

ordination. The authorities are Lampridius[1], Eutropius[2], and Aurelius Victor[3], but their statements are derived from a single source; even in phraseology they scarcely differ. The evidence therefore is unconfirmed[4], and moreover it is open to grave objections on *a priori* grounds. Dismissal of a whole legion,—*ignominiosa missio*, —was the greatest military disgrace a general could inflict[5], and of its two forms *exauctoratio* was the more complete[6]. One is then forced to wonder whence Alexander gained the influence which would enable him thus to treat the army with impunity. Though possessing an almost superstitious dread of the disgrace of dismissal, would the army obey the command to disband when spoken by an Emperor who was not feared? The authority on which we are asked to believe that this was so is unconvincing, and moreover Lampridius really stands as witness against himself. The one specific *exauctoratio* to which he alludes is described in terms derived from an earlier and more famous occasion. A legion is in mutiny at Antioch before the Persian War and Alexander ascends the tribunal to allay the tumult caused by his arrest of some rebellious soldiers; three times he essays without success to obtain order, and finally, "Quirites," he exclaims, "lay down your arms and go." The troops obey the dreaded word

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XII. 5.

[2] VIII. 23. quasdam tumultuantes integras exauctoravit.

[3] *Caes.* XXIV. 3. Ibi tumultuantes legiones plerasque constantissime abiecit: quod in praesens gloriae, mox exitio datum.

[4] The reference in Herod. VI. 4. 7 is to a lesser affair which will be dealt with later.

[5] Digest, 49. 16. 3. 1. Poenae militum huiuscemodi sunt, castigatio, pecuniaria multa, munerum indictio, militiae mutatio, gradus deiectio, ignominiosa missio:—an ascending series.

[6] The two kinds were—(1) Missio: despatch into the colonies; (2) Exauctoratio: dismissal from all service. But the two terms are not always differentiated. Cf. Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, pp. 184–5.

"Quirites" and depart to various neighbouring inns, subsequently to return and beg forgiveness and to fight with distinction in the war[1]. That entire episode had been acted before by Julius Caesar in Campania and its details are embodied in the pages of history. Either Alexander or Lampridius was a shameless plagiarist. Without doubt it is Lampridius. Caesar standing before his troops and quelling their sedition with a single word is credible enough; the magnetism exercised by a great leader of men has been exemplified a hundred times from the days of Hannibal. But a mere lad who has never led an army, whose popularity is based on associations and relationships rather than on force of personality, was not likely to extinguish an insurrection by a brief rhetorical display. To reject texts is for the most part a dangerous course where their accuracy cannot be definitely disproved, but it is clear that the authority for the dismissal of the legions is insufficient to warrant credence in acts so perilous. It must rather be believed that the general stringency of Alexander's disciplinary measures, as contrasted with those of Septimius and his successors, gave rise to exaggerations in after times[2].

As for the general system of training there is even less information. Lampridius speaks of the good order and good equipment of the troops[3]. Herodian mentions the training which was necessary on the eve of the Persian War[4]. The severe obligation of carrying seventeen day's provisions on the march was relaxed and an attempt

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LIII.

[2] A minor example of "severitas" is given by Lampridius, *Alex. Sev.* LII. 1.

[3] *Alex. Sev.* L.

[4] Herod. VI. 4. 3. ἐκεῖ δὲ (sc. ἐς τὴν Ἀντιόχειαν) γενόμενος τὰ πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον ἐξήρτυε, γυμνάζων τε τοὺς στρατιώτας καὶ τὰ πολεμικὰ ἀσκῶν.

was made to restrict the army's love of ostentation by directing it towards objects of martial pomp and ornament, fine horses, splendid armour, and shields enriched with silver and gold. More than this history does not disclose.

A reform casually mentioned by Lampridius[1] relating to military sinecures was probably one of considerable importance. There had grown up, in addition to the regular *tribuni militum*, a class of supernumerary salaried *tribuni* not on active service,—men who held the rank of *tribuni* but who were exempted from service by Imperial decree, and who were simply aspirants to a position not yet vacant. This class originated, it would seem, under Claudius[2]; and in it may be included the *tribuni vacantes*, superannuated salaried officers liable to be called out as reservists,—who appear in the last stage of the Empire. Alexander did away with the *adscripti* or *vacantivi*[3] of his time, the reference being probably to the officers waiting for a vacancy rather than to those holding the office as a permanent sinecure[4]. One cannot dogmatise upon the number of these *vacantivi*, yet

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xv. 3. Deinde se iure iurando constrinxit ne quem adscriptum, id est vacantivum, haberet.

[2] Suet. *Claud.* 25. Stipendiaque instituit et imaginariae militiae genus quod vocatur supra numerum, quo absentes et titulo tenus fungerentur. In connection with the tribuni vacantivi *v.* Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, p. 182 sqq.

[3] Lampridius gives both terms. Adscriptus is the term in use in Alexander's time : vacantivus that used in the days of Lampridius. This use of the former technical term by Lampridius, certainly points to his statement having been derived from an old authority.

[4] I can find no authority for the use of the term adscriptus in the latter sense. Marquardt takes the same view of this passage, but without assigning a reason. There is the same reference presumably in Treb. Poll. *Trig. Tyr.* xviii. 11, where the "adscripticius, id est vacans" is differentiated from the "tribunus stipator qui non vere aliquid ageret."

it is likely enough that they quickly became numerous under a corrupted administration, and Alexander may be credited with a valuable reform. The existence of salaried officers holding high rank and taking no active part in the command of the army could only have a demoralising effect upon the men. But this reform, like so many others which Alexander attempted, was not permanent; *adscripticii* reappear in the reign of Gallienus[1].

In these scattered references[2] one may detect something of an attempt at military reform. For some forty years the army had enjoyed the utmost licence at the hands of careless or incompetent Emperors who cared little for military subordination. Alexander's reign represents a reaction against the preeminence of the military caste. Yet in his procedure the weakness of the administration is made manifest: "in the execution of his design, the Emperor affected to display his love, and to conceal his fear, of the army[3]." In reality Alexander effected nothing permanent. The temporary loss of licence and prestige was signalised first by minor mutinies, finally by the Emperor's assassination, and under Maximin the renewed ascendancy of the soldiery was only the more complete on account of its transient and partial interruption.

But the most daring, and for a time the most effectual, of Alexander's attempts at reform remains to be mentioned; that was the change which he effected in the position of the praetorian praefecture. Properly speaking the

[1] Cf. *C. I. L.* VI. 5309.

[2] Dio, LV. 23–5, confines himself to a description of the army's constitution, and Hyginus does not help; the latter's date is disputed. Information as to Alexander's reforms is therefore necessarily derived from the least trustworthy sources.

[3] Gibbon (ed. Bury), I. 153.

prefect was simply the chief of a legion[1], or rather of the praetorian cohorts, and his power was held merely at the will of the Emperor[2]. Owing to the importance of the praetorians in Roman politics, the *praefectus praetorii* had long held a position of preeminence in Rome. Plautianus as prefect had for a time almost usurped the functions of the Emperor. The office was usually collegiate and for the most part dual. At the beginning of the third century however, while the change in the nature of the office was in progress, there were several deviations from the rule. Commodus and Julianus had three prefects[3]: Alexander had both one[4] and three. Chrestus and Flavianus were the prefects at his accession, and while he was unwilling to dismiss them from office, he fettered their powers by the appointment of Ulpian as superior colleague[5]: an arrangement which worked unsatisfactorily and was rectified by the execution of the two first appointed.

The prefect was then in theory a military officer, and even after the extension of his functions, he still remained an Imperial official, dealing with Imperial,—to the

[1] Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 144.

[2] He was not a representative, but held a delegated Imperial power. Mommsen, l.c. v. 430.

[3] Lamp. *Commod. Ant.* VI. 13; Spartian. *D. Julian.* VII. 5; *Sever.* VI. 5.

[4] Ulpian from the execution of Chrestus and Flavianus till his death in 228. As to the prefects after his death there is considerable doubt. Sossianus was prefect on April 11, 228: *v.* Clinton *ad ann.* Paulus was a prefect. M. Aedinius Julianus probably became prefect about 230. (Thorigny, *Berichte d. sächs. Ges.* 1862, p. 228.) There is a reference in the important inscription, *C. I. G.* III. 4483, to Julius Philippus Arabs ὁ ἐξοχώτατος ἔπαρχος τοῦ ἱεροῦ πραιτωρίου καὶ τῆς πατρίδος, but his appointment was apparently subsequent to Alexander's death.

[5] Zos. I. 11. Μαμαίας...ἐπιστησάσης αὐτοῖς Οὐλπιανὸν ἐπιγνώμονα καὶ ὥσπερ κοινωνὸν τῆς ἀρχῆς; cf. Dio, LXXX. 1; Zon. XII. 15; Eutrop. VIII. 23; Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XV. 6, XXVI. 5, XXXI. 2.

exclusion of Senatorial,—business. Consequently the Emperors before Alexander, jealously protecting their affairs from the interference of the Senate, had themselves appointed the prefects from the ranks of the Equites. To this there is scarcely an exception[1], save that Plautianus was made a Senator after his appointment, and even this elevation was due to the ascendancy of the official rather than to any desire to make the office Senatorial. Alexander reversed the system, and now, almost for the first time[2], we find the Senate invited to interfere in essentially Imperial spheres. In his reign the prefects were appointed by the authority of the Senate, and if that body should select one who was not a member of their order, he received the Senatorial dignity forthwith[3]. The reason assigned for this change is characteristic of Alexander. The praetorian prefect now had important judicial functions, and Alexander was unwilling that the Senator should ever be judged by any man other than his peer, whatever his authority as a delegate of the Emperor might be. Septimius would have laughed at such a policy.

For some time past the Emperors with their monarchic views had been extending the functions of the *praefectus* to the exclusion of the Senatorial magistrates. So did Alexander; but after the changes introduced by him, the continuance of the policy was in reality its exact reversal.

[1] Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. p. 140. Cf. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxi. 4.

[2] Trajan once took the advice of the Senate on an Imperial matter. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, vii. p. 454.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xix. 1. Praef. Praet. sibi ex senatus auctoritate constituit. *Ib.* xxi. 3–5. Praef. praetorii suis senatoriam addidit dignitatem, ut viri clarissimi et essent et dicerentur. quod antea vel raro fuerat vel omnino diu non fuerat, eo usque ut si quis imperatorum successorem praef. praet. dare vellet, laticlaviam eidem per libertum summitteret...Alexander autem idcirco senatores voluit praef. praet., ne quis non senator de Romano senatore iudicaret. Much the same applies to the praefectus urbi; cf. *ib.* xix. 2, Praef. urbi a senatu accepit.

Septimius had given a great impetus to the change; while even before his reign the *praefectus* had possessed a share in civil jurisdiction[1], he appointed in Papinian a prefect whose knowledge of military affairs was perhaps as small as his acquaintance with the law was wide. After Papinian legal ability is often the first qualification, and the knowledge of military affairs or tactics becomes subsidiary. Suddenly the prefect begins to be employed in all kinds of judicial and administrative business; he hears the Emperor's *cognitiones*; he makes arrests and confiscations; he appears in the Emperor's Council, whereat he presides in the absence of the Emperor[2]. He is in fact the Emperor's right hand man, a prime minister, judge and commander-in-chief. A few years after the death of Alexander we find the prefect Misitheus practically carrying on the government himself[3].

The increase in the power of the prefect under Alexander is due however rather to circumstances than to a defined policy. From the first Ulpian was singled out to be the leading statesman, and the prefecture fell naturally to him, as being the position from which he could most readily make his influence felt. Once appointed, it was only natural that Ulpian, in view of the Emperor's attachment and his own attainments, should extend the functions of his office. The final rebellion of the praetorians against the sternness of his discipline only determined Alexander to uphold the majesty of the office which they had attacked. Thus we find that in 230, two years after Ulpian's fall, a new function is given to the prefect,—a modified legislative power. Henceforward a principle or rule laid down by him, even if applicable in its terms to more than one particular case, is valid law

[1] Not a large one. Cf. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. p. 144.
[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xv. 6. [3] Capitol. *Gord. tr.* 28.

provided that it is not contrary to statute or rescript, until it is superseded by Imperial authority[1].

The extended power of the *praefectus*, who thus became largely a civil official, was a direct blow at the ascendancy of the army. The transfer of the office from the Equites to the Senate formed part of the attempt to revive the latter body. It thus bears upon each of the main branches of Alexander's policy. But while the new position of the *praefectus* is a sufficient indication of the attempt at a new régime, the transfer of the office is not the most striking feature in the Emperor's policy of Senatorial aggrandisement. In its essence the Senate was a deliberative body, and in one aspect the Dyarchy was a return to the old Republican system of government by a magistrate aided by an expert body of advisers. Augustus, to a large extent, had lived up to this conception; he had continually listened with every appearance of respect to Senatorial suggestions. Moreover, adopting a device which really detracted from the Senatorial power while apparently increasing it, he had appointed a Senatorial Advisory Cabinet,—a Permanent Committee, including the two consuls, established for the preliminary deliberation of Senatorial business. And this committee after A.D. 12 was developed into a kind of miniature Senate which met at the Emperor's house and passed decrees, legally valid, and regarded as resolutions of the Senate itself. Tiberius maintained the system, at least for a while[2], but after his reign the Cabinet completely

[1] *Cod. Just.* I. 26. 2. Formam a praef. praet. datam, etsi generalis sit, minime legibus vel constitutionibus contrariam, si nihil postea ex auctoritate mea innovatum est, servari aequum est; cf. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 433. Duruy, *Hist. of Rome etc.*, VI. 290.

[2] Suet. *Tib.* LV. Super veteres amicos ac familiares, viginti sibi e numero principum civitatis depoposcerat velut consiliarios in negotiis publicis.

disappears. Many of the Emperors were willing enough to listen to Senatorial advice; many even sought it[1]; but as a whole they refused to be bound by the presence of a selected body of advisers who were able to bring far greater weight to bear on any question than could the large and more unwieldy body of the Senate. So in lieu of the Cabinet of Augustus, the Emperors contented themselves with appointing special commissions from time to time,—commissions which were seldom, if ever, drawn entirely from the Senatorial order. Juvenal's Fourth Satire is in part a skit on them, and their part in politics became an important one. Out of the juristic commissions of Hadrian sprang the *consilium principis* itself. Such was the beginning of a body which, under Septimius, had gained a controlling influence over most of the political field[2].

Alexander's innovation was a return to the Cabinet of Augustus. He did not abolish the *consilium principis*, which had become a portion of the system of government; without doubt he reduced its power, but it continued to exist side by side with the Senatorial Cabinet. As to the constitution of the new council there is some diversity of evidence, but as to its scope the historians are agreed. It was concerned with all the questions of administration[3], and it is probable that it normally embraced sixteen members[4]. Lampridius[5] however makes

[1] E.g. Tiberius (Suet. *Tib.* xxx.), Vespasian (Dio lxvi. 10), Hadrian (Spart. *Hadr.* viii. 6, Senatui legitimo, cum in urbe vel iuxta urbem esset, semper interfuit).

[2] Cf. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 183–4. The *consilium principis* came in time to usurp all the advisory functions of the Senate.

[3] Dio, lxxx. 1. *κἀκ τῆς γερουσίας τοὺς ἀμείνονας συμβούλους προσείλετο, ἅπαν πρακτέον κοινουμένη αὐτοῖς*, followed by Zon. xii. 15. The innovation is attributed to Mammaea.

[4] Herod. vi. 1. 2.

[5] *Alex. Sev.* xvi.

no mention of the number sixteen. He states that Imperial decrees were submitted before signature to a council of twenty jurists[1] and fifty learned men, who after deliberation which was recorded in writing, formally voted upon them; and it is to be presumed that an adverse vote involved the cancellation of the proposed decree. Lampridius adds that the constitution of the council varied with the matter before it. For military affairs military experts were convened, for legal and administrative questions jurists and men of civil experience.

The divergences between Lampridius and Herodian have been reconciled by modern historians on the conjectural assumption that the normal council of sixteen was reinforced by experts for the discussion of questions of magnitude[2]. But the conjecture is not convincing, for

[1] Jurists probably formed the backbone of the Council. Ulpian, Paulus, Florentinus, Marcianus, Modestinus, and Saturninus all had seats upon it. The writings of all are preserved in the Pandects.

[2] Duruy, l.c. vi. c. 95. Duruy adds that, like the Cabinet of Augustus, this enlarged Cabinet of Alexander passed senatus consulta, and that senatus consulta proper henceforth cease. Neither statement seems to be accurate. The first is presumably founded on Lampridius' words, "ut non minus in consilio essent sententiae quam senatus consultum conficerent, et id quidem ita ut iretur per sententias singulorum," that does not necessarily imply that the votes, though formally taken, had the force of law: on the contrary the vote was a preliminary to the "sacratio" of the Emperor. The second statement is applicable only to senatus consulta dealing with private law (cf. Moyle's Justinian, p. 45). Schiller (*Ges. d. Rom. Kaiserzeit*, i. 765) holds a somewhat different view. He too holds that the decisions of the Cabinet were authoritative, but I can see nothing in the historians to warrant such an opinion, nor is it intrinsically likely; such a system would detract from the Senatorial ascendancy at which Alexander aimed. The remaining words of Lampridius regarding the summoning of experts on military matters, etc., are taken by Schiller as referring to the consilium principis, but the context seems clearly to show that the historian is referring to the Advisory Council. He, however, agrees with Duruy (p. 466) that the numbers of the Cabinet varied. This whole problem has also vexed the writers of the

Lampridius in reality contradicts the evidence of Herodian, and Dio gives no aid[1]. The exact constitution of the Cabinet cannot now be definitely ascertained, but it seems clear that it normally consisted of sixteen, and that, short of passing valid decrees, it exercised considerable influence on legislature and executive alike.

Such a council would not of necessity imply the revival of the Senate; under Augustus a not dissimilar assembly had taken into its own hands many of the functions proper to the Senate as a whole. But it is unlikely that Alexander would permit such usurpation. Taken in conjunction with other known alterations in practice, it cannot be doubted that the Senatorial council of Alexander was designed as part of the policy of Senatorial revival. It is noticeable in this connection that the origin of the council is attributed to Mammaea[2] in the earliest period of the reign. Probably she saw, or thought to see, in the Senate a bulwark against the

German theses on Alexander. Wahle suggests that Herodian is referring to the constitution of the body at the commencement of the reign, Lampridius to its constitution some years later; but he by implication identifies it with the principis consilium of previous reigns (Wahle, *De Imp. Sev. Alex.* p. 21 sqq.). Muche also identifies it with the principis consilium, but he conveniently omits all reference to the 50 learned men of whom Lampridius speaks (Muche, *De Imp. Sev. Alex.* p. 7 sqq.); Porrath (*Der Kaiser Alex. Sev.* p. 22) is entirely inconclusive on the subject.

[1] The passage in Lamp. is unsatisfactory in more ways than one. He seems to imply that a Cabinet of 70 was formed so that the number might correspond to a quorum of the Senate, "ita ut in consilio non minus essent sententiae quam sen. consultum conficerent." But the Senatorial quorum was 50 now, as in the time of Augustus. With the view that the whole passage refers to the Consilium Principis I disagree for the reason stated above, but it is of course quite possible that Lamp. confused the two bodies and applied to the Cabinet facts applicable to the other body. On this assumption it is reasonable to accept the statement of Herodian that the Cabinet consisted of sixteen members.

[2] Dio, LXXX. 1.

intrigues of soldiers or aspiring ministers under a weak administration.

A further noteworthy reform is the reintroduction of the practice of *commendatio*. In the early Empire Senatorial magistrates were usually appointed by Senatorial decree out of a list of selected candidates presented by the Emperor. In theory this method of appointment was in force throughout the first two centuries and onwards, but in practice the *commendatio* was at an early date rendered farcical by a subterfuge. The Emperor submitted only so many names as there were offices to fill; in fact gradually took into his own hands the appointment of non-imperial,—as of imperial,—ministers. Alexander reverted to the practice of Augustus[1], and took the commands of the Senate, in regard not only to the magistracies, but also to the priestly colleges, in so far as appointments to them lay in the Senate's hands[2].

To Alexander's attitude towards individual Senators reference has already been made[3]. He chose his friends chiefly from the Senate and treated all Senators alike with courtesy as his equals. Once he paid the Senate the high,—but rhetorical,—compliment of exclaiming that it was honour enough for him to be accounted of its

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLIII. 2. Consules...ex senatus auctoritate nominavit.

[2] *Ib.* XLIX. 2. Pontificatus et XV-viratus et auguratus codicillares fecit, ita ut in senatu allegarentur. In appointments to the priestly colleges the principles of cooption and Senatorial appointment go side by side. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 422. Alexander also, it may be noted, caused governors of Senatorial provinces to be selected ex Senatus consulto and not by lot. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXIII. But this reversion to the old practice (Lex Pompeia) was intended for the benefit of the provincials rather than for the aggrandisement of the Senate.

[3] *v.* p. 69.

number[1]. But the Senate he thus addressed was at least not the bastard body of Elagabalus; one of Alexander's first actions had been to eject the tyrant's minions[2], and to restore the order to its former level of respectability.

What was Alexander's personal position in the state, while this Senatorial revival was in progress? Representing a reaction against the moral enormities of Elagabalus as well as against the dynastic schemes of Septimius, one would expect to find him seeking to raise the Principate out of the shame and obloquy into which it had fallen. So far as personal conduct goes, he did so; the whole life of Alexander is a standing protest against the iniquities of his predecessor. But he might have done more. Having elevated the Senate and at least made a pretence of curtailing the licence of the army, he could, without interfering with his policy of a Senatsherrschaft, strengthen his own Imperial position. And there is continually in the background,—or rather one should say the foreground,—the personality of Mammaea, an ambitious and domineering woman who, while sympathising with the policy of reaction, would ill consent to see her son's position seriously overshadowed.

The coins of Alexander lend some colour to the theory which has been advanced that he strove, while ennobling the Senate, to add lustre to his own position also. In addition to the old legends of the felicitas, virtus, concordia, pietas, securitas, providentia, of the Caesars we find such legends as PERPETVITAS AVG. or AETER-

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XI. 5. Vos ipsi magnifici unum me de vobis esse censete. It is significant in this connection that Dio, writing in Alexander's time, more than once describes Senators as ὁμότιμοι with the Emperor. Dio, LII. 7, XV. 31, LXVII. 2. *v.* Mommsen, *Droit Public*, V. 173.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XV. 1.

NITATIBVS[1], legends resembling those of Constantius and Galerius and Diocletian. But little importance can be attached to these; for though the legend PERPETVITAS is new and becomes increasingly common from Alexander onwards, the equivalent AETERNITAS dates back even as far as Vespasian[2]. More striking than the coins is the work of the jurists. There appears to have been in Alexander's reign an attempt definitely to formulate the idea innate in the Principate from the beginning, though contrary to its pretended principles, that the Emperor was above the laws. Alexander lays it down that a *lex imperii* absolves an Emperor from the forms of the law[3]. Ulpian proclaims that the Emperor is *legibus solutus*[4]. Dio writes under Alexander in the same strain[5]. But this ruling, though it is characteristic of the times, and contrary to the spirit of the Dyarchy in which the Emperor as a magistrate was strictly bound by the law, did not seriously magnify the Imperial powers. The theory mattered little, and in spite of all, the Emperor, though he might override the law, was still unable to modify, by his own authority, the terms of a Senatus Consultum; the legislative power was divided as before.

It is then hypercritical to attempt to find evidence for any serious enhancement of the Imperial prerogatives under Alexander. The fact is, the Principate was already

[1] Eckhel VII. 279–80; Cohen VIII. 361 and 414.

[2] Such titles in reality mean little as yet. Antoninus Pius, who was no autocrat, wished to be called *πατὴρ ἀνθρώπων*. (Paus. VIII. 43.)

[3] *Cod. Just.* VI. 23. 3. Licet lex imperii sollemnibus iuris imperatorem solverit.

[4] Digest, 1. 3. 31. Princeps legibus solutus est: Augusta etiam licet legibus soluta non sit principes tamen eadem illi privilegia tribuunt quae ipsi habent.

[5] Dio, LIII. 18. *οὐδενὶ τῶν γεγραμμένων ἐνέχονται*; cf. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, V. 8.

strong enough. With the offices which the Emperor held he could exercise in official matters what power he willed, and the mere assumption of new titles of honour added little to his prestige. Nor was the acquisition of new offices of any importance to him, and Alexander on this account wisely abandoned the apparently deliberate attempt of Elagabalus to make the perpetual consulship an Imperial perquisite[1]. The constitutional position of Alexander differed little therefore from that of his predecessors. The chief strength of that position lay in the tribunician and proconsular power with which he was, as usual, invested immediately on his accession. The tribunician power since the year 23 B.C. had taken a prominent place among the Imperial titles and the conferment of the *tribunicia potestas* had been the step by which many Emperors had signified their choice of a successor. An office originally democratic and popular, it was now freed from its old collegiate character, and by carrying the power of veto and initiative, and also conferring inviolability on the person of its holder, it implied an actual supremacy within the city walls. The proconsular power was also an office of great constitutional significance. At first the consular imperium had been "maius": it took precedence of all magistracies, and the proconsular power was only applicable to the provinces. But even as early as the time of Augustus, by a series of enactments which are lost, the *imperium proconsulare* was extended to home affairs, leaving the proconsul in the same relation to the whole Empire[2] as that which the

[1] Elagabalus was consul in 218, 219, 220 and 222 A.D.

[2] The imperial proconsulare imperium was "maius" in the provinces no less than in Rome; cf. Digest, 1. 16. 8. Proconsul maius imperium in sua provincia habet omnibus post principem. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 134.

republican proconsuls had enjoyed towards their particular provinces.

In addition to these powers the Emperors received special privileges in regard to their attendance and position in the Senate. The *ius relationis*[1], or right of addressing the Senate in writing in a submission to be read by an official delegated for the purpose and to take precedence of all other business, was a privilege always valuable to a domineering monarch whose relations with the Senate were formal, and one which was especially useful on occasions when the Emperor required to legislate while abroad or in retirement from Rome. The privilege was one granted in different degrees[2]. Many Emperors received the plain *ius relationis*, the right to introduce a single motion in this way. Others were more favoured: Probus had the *ius tertiae*, Pertinax the *ius quartae relationis*. Alexander and Marcus Aurelius were the most favoured of all: on them the Senate in an exuberance of loyalty conferred the *ius quintae relationis*. An Emperor who thus had the right to bring in five motions at each sitting, each taking precedence of all other business, could probably, should he so desire, control the subject matter of the entire deliberations of the Senate.

These powers, together with the title of Pater Patriae, had been[3], according to Lampridius[4], conferred on Alex-

[1] In addition to the ius relationis, the Emperors had great power over the Senate through their possession of the functions of censor, which had belonged to them since Domitian. Alexander exercised them in purging the Senate. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xv. 1.

[2] Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. p. 177.

[3] Pater Patriae was a title which no longer possessed all the associations pertaining to it in Republican times: it had now no more constitutional or political significance than the modern title "Defender of the Faith."

[4] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* i.

ander in a single day, and though Mommsen seems to be dubious on the point[1], there need be little doubt that such was the case. The proconsular imperium and the *ius relationis* (together probably with the right of making peace and war) would be conferred in a single enactment,—the *lex regia*,—the passing of which was an ordinary formality[2]. The *tribunicia potestas*, not being previously held by the Emperor, would naturally be added to the list at the same time. Nor was the shower of honours at accession anything unusual[3]. In addition to these civil offices each Emperor in turn held the office of *pontifex maximus*[4]. The rule that the first magistrate should hold the chief priesthood was a natural deduction from the established principle that all Romans entering on high magistracy should become pontiffs[5]. The office carried with it important functions and great prestige. The nomination of priests and the general supervision of the practice of religion fell to the care of the chief pontiff, while the monarchy in adopting the office, and assuming the highest religious functions of the old Republic, consecrated itself in the eyes of the populace.

The office of *pontifex maximus* was kept distinct from the Principate and the new Emperor usually waited some months before assuming it[6]. The rule was probably

[1] Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 418. Otho and Pertinax had similarly received numerous honours on a single day at their accession. Tac. *Hist.* I. 47; Capit. *Pertin.* v. Hence Lamp. is wrong in saying that Alexander was thus honoured "novo exemplo." Wahle, *De Imp. Alex. Sev.* p. 21.

[2] Taylor, *Constit. Hist. of Rome*, p. 416.

[3] Cf. Dio, LIX. 3, LXXIX. 2; Tac. *Hist.* I. 47, etc.

[4] Dio goes further, LIII. 17, *τοὺς αὐτοκράτορας ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἱερωσύναις ἱερῶσθαι*. A prospective Emperor would receive lesser priesthoods before accession. Alexander for example was Sodalis Antoninianus in 221 A.D.

[5] Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 411.

[6] Vespasian, for instance, succeeded in Dec. 69. He became pontifex maximus on 7 March, 70. *C. I. L.* III. 849.

observed by Alexander[1], but in the second year of his reign we find him duly installed in the office and thus possessed of all the powers on which the Imperial edifice was based. Alexander then retained the old offices of the Principate without adding to their number or modifying, save perhaps in unessential particulars, their form. It may be urged, as tending to show that he wished to alter the Imperial standing, that he prohibited the application to himself of the term "dominus[2]." But, as we have seen, the prohibition was of little effect, for the term appears with regularity in the inscriptions, and possibly the tradition is unfounded. The fact that Alexander never uses the term himself proves nothing, for the title was not officially adopted by the Emperors till the fourth century[3].

If Alexander had been whole-hearted in his desire to aggrandize the Senate, he might well have signalised his intention by the dismissal of his foreign Imperial bodyguard. The existence of such a guard in Rome,—to modern eyes a concomitant of tyranny,—is all the more remarkable for the fact that it was instituted by Augustus at the time of the war with Antonius[4] and is thus coeval

[1] There is no inscription or coin on which Alexander is described as imperator and pontifex alone. The coins of 222 which describe him as pontifex (Eckhel, VII. 268) are prior to his accession; cf. *C. I. L.* III. 1776. He became a pontifex probably in 220. He was also elected to the Sodales Antoniniani in 221. (*C. I. L.* VI. 2001 and 2009; Mommsen, *Droit Public*, V. 415.) Other Pontifices of the reign are C. Furius Octavianus. *C. I. L.* VI. 1423, and L. T. Cl. Aur. Quintianus (cos. 235) *C. I. L.* X. 3850, V. 3223.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* IV. Julian did the same. *Misopogon*, ed. Spanh. 343.

[3] The importance of the term "dominus" may be exaggerated. It is used not as expressing the antithesis between master and slave, but simply as indicating a general social superiority.

[4] Dio, LV. 24, *τούτοις ἤρξατο μὲν νομίζειν ἀφ' οὗ τοὺς συστρατευσαμένους τῷ πατρὶ πρὸς τὰ ὅπλα αὖθις ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀντώνιον ἀνεκάλεσεν, ἐτήρησε δέ.*

with the Dyarchy itself. Under Augustus the guard, of which the history is meagre, was composed of Germans[1]. Dissolved by Galba[2], it was reconstituted by Trajan[3], and is heard of again under Caracalla[4]. Between the death of Caracalla and the middle years of Alexander's reign it would seem that the constitution of the guard changed[5], but the point is doubtful, and at any rate in 238 the Germans reappear[6].

This guard, after its reconstitution by Trajan, came to be known under the name of *Equites Singulares Augusti*[7] who are frequently mentioned in inscriptions. Septimius, it appears, doubled their number: at least he erected new barracks—the *Nova Castra Severiana*—which it has been plausibly supposed were designed for their accommodation[8]. Alexander, so far from rejecting the body-guard

[1] Dio, LVI. 23. During the first two centuries the body-guard was nearly always composed of Germans, but Caligula had some Batavians. (Suet. *Calig.* XLIII.)

[2] Suet. *Galb.* XII.

[3] Tac. *Ann.* I. 24.

[4] Herod. IV. 13. 6, Γερμανοὶ δὲ ἱππεῖς, οἷς ὁ Ἀντωνῖνος ἔχαιρε φρουροῖς τε τοῦ σώματος ἐχρῆτο κ.τ.λ. The scene is the murder of Caracalla: his body-guard was then in attendance upon him in Asia.

[5] Dio, LV. 24 (speaking of his own time), ξένοι τε ἱππεῖς ἐπίλεκτοι οἷς τὸ τῶν Βαταούων ἀπὸ τῆς Βαταούης τῆς ἐν τῷ Ῥήνῳ νήσου ὄνομα, ὅτι δὴ κράτιστοι ἱππεύειν εἰσί, κεῖται. Cf. Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, p. 215: the passage however does not necessarily imply that the guard *were* Batavians.

[6] Capitol. *Max. et Balb.* XIV. 2, In Palatio soli cum Germanis principes.

[7] Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, p. 216. The point is disputed, it is true, but the consensus of opinion is strongly in favour of the view which I have taken. Cf. *B. M. Cat. of Sculpture*, III. nos. 2354 and 2392,—sepulchral *cippi* of Equites Singulares: in no. 2392 an Eques and his horse are figured.

[8] Till now the Equites Singulares had lived in barracks known as the Castra priora (*C. I. L.* VI. 3183, 3191, 3196, etc.). The new barracks, built by Septimius, have by a process of elimination been assigned to the

as an adjunct of tyranny, treated its members with consideration[1]. There are two of his "privilegia[2]" extant, by one of which he grants the Roman citizenship and the right of *connubium* to those *Equites Singulares* stationed under Aelius Victor in the *Castra Nova Severiana* who

Equites Singulares; it is difficult to conceive that they were required for any other troops; neither the praetorian, the urban cohorts, nor the vigiles were augmented in number to the best of our knowledge. Ceuleneer, *Vie de Septime Sévère*, p. 276; Henzen, *Sugli equit. singolari* (*Annals dell' Inst.* 1850), p. 33 sqq.; Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, p. 218. Marquardt considers that it is doubtful whether the barracks were built by Severus, and suggests that the name "nova Severiana" would be equally applicable were they built by Alexander (they existed in Alexander's time, *C. I. L.* III. p. 893; Privilegium, No. LI.); but there is no evidence for this, and Herod. III. 13. 4 tends to the belief that Septimius increased the number of the guard. The phrase there, *τῆς ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ δυνάμεως αὐτῆς τετραπλασιασθείσης*, if it refers to the soldiery, is certainly inaccurate, but an increase in the numbers of the body-guard may have given rise to it. It may be added that the terms of the inscription in *C. I. L.* III. 893 (cited below) lend colour to the theory that the barracks were old-established in 229. (Maximin was, it appears, an Eques Singularis under Severus. Capit. *Maximin.* III. 5.)

[1] Cf. Dio, LV. 24, *καὶ εἰσὶ καὶ νῦν σύστημα ἴδιον, ῥάβδους φέροντες, ὥσπερ οἱ ἑκατόνταρχοι.*

[2] *C. I. L.* III. p. 893, No LI. and III. p. 1999, No. LXXXVI.
The former is as follows:

IMP · CAES · DIVI · ANTONINI · MAGNI · PII · FIL ·
DIVI · SEVERI · PII · NEPOS · M · AURELLIVS · SE
VERVS · ALEXANDER · PIVS · FELIX · AVG · PONT ·
MAX · TRIB · POT · VIIII · COS · II · P · P ·
EQVITIB · QVI · INTER · SINGULARES · MILITAVER ·
CASTRIS · NOVIS · SEVERIANIS · QVIBVS · PRA
EST · AELIVS · VICTIOR · TRIB · QVINIS · ET · VICENIS ·
STIPENDIS · EMERITIS · DIMISS · HONE
TA · MISSIONE · QVORVM · NOMINA · SUB
SCRIIPTA · SUNT · IPSIS · FILISQVE · EORVM · QVI ·
CIVITATEM · RO–OMANAM · QVI · EORVM ·
NON · HABERENT · DEDEDIT · ET · CONVBIVM ·
CVM · VXOR · QVAS · TUNC · HABVISSENT · CVM ·
IIS · QVAS · POSTEA · DVXISSENT · DVMTA
XAT · SINGVLIS ·

had served for twenty-five years[1]. The presence of the body-guard of foreign troops, with its two barracks within the walls of Rome, combined with the presence of a legion in Italy, is perhaps the best of all commentaries on the character of Alexander's reforms.

The reaction of Alexander's policy upon his popularity must be determined from fragmentary evidence. Naturally the Senate would be satisfied with his schemes, and in some ways the army had cause for gratitude; few Emperors, if any, had extended so much personal sympathy to individuals, or evinced so whole-hearted a desire for the general welfare[2]. Occasional passages contain references to the Senatorial feeling; but on the whole it is remarkable how silent alike are historians and inscriptions on the Senate's attitude. But of the army it is easier to speak. Coins and inscriptions bear frequent witness to its loyalty and good will. Coins proclaim the FIDES EXERCITVS, the FIDES MILITVM, and the PIETAS MILITVM[3]. From Rome there are several *laterculi* of the praetorians testifying to their affection for the royal house[4]. In Lower Italy

[1] It has been supposed that in addition to the Equites Singulares there was another body-guard in Alexander's reign, known as the Protectores Augusti, a body of officers of the equestrian order serving the same purpose as the Equites Singulares; (cf. *C. I. L.* III. 1805, and Orelli, 1869: protectores lateris divini Augusti nostri). It has been thought that these Protectores originated under Caracalla (Spart. *Carac.* v. 8, ita ut in scafam cum protectoribus vix descenderet), being at first an informal body and becoming a fixed guard only under Aurelian. But Mommsen (*Eph. Ep.* v. 126) has shown that the reference in Spartianus (and that in Capit. *Max. Duo*, XIV. 4, "inde propere Carthaginem venit cum pompa regali et protectoribus") is anachronistic and that the first authentic reference to the Protectores is at about 253–260 A.D. (*Eph. Ep.* v. 121, No. 1 = Orelli 3180.)

[2] Herod. VI. 1. 2.

[3] Cohen, IV. p. 406, Nos. 49–62, and p. 422, No. 200.

[4] *C. I. L.* VI. 2831, 2832, 2833, 2835.

a military tribune, Aurelius Silvanus, offers a prayer for the safety of Alexander and Mammaea[1]. From Moesia Superior come two inscriptions in Alexander's honour,—prayers for his safety,—at Naissus[2] and Ulpiana[3], the latter made by a *speculator* of the Legio IIII. Flavia. At Latobici in Pannonia Superior, Julius Terentius of the Legio X. Gemina Severiana offers a similar prayer[4]. From Ulcisia Castra in the same province are two inscriptions in honour of Alexander and Mammaea respectively belonging to the COH·I·OO·N·S·S·S·which is otherwise unknown[5]. In Dalmatia, Julius Tacitianus[6] dedicates a further inscription to the Emperor[7]. At Brigetio in Pannonia Superior, in connection with the restoration of a temple by Maximinus[8] of the Legio I.,

[1] Hübner, *Ex. Script. Epig. Lat.* 542.

[2] *C. I. L.* III. 1676.

I·O·M·
PRO·S·D·N·
AVG·M·VL·
MARTINVS·SR·
COS·LEG·VII·C(I)
S·V·R·FVSCO·ET·DEXTRO·COS·
(year 225).

[3] *C. I. L.* III. 8173.

[4] *C. I. L.* III. 3899.

DIIS·DEABVSQVE·
OMNIB·GENIO·
LOCI·SABR·PRO·
SALVTE·IMP·ALEXan
DRO·AVG·IVLIVS·TERE·
NTIVS·B·COS·LEG·
X·GEM·SEVERIAN·
V·S·L·M· ..... (year 224)

[5] *C. I. L.* III. 3638–9.

[6] A Julius Tacitianus evocatus is mentioned in an inscription of Panormus (*C. I. L.* X. 7289): we may presume him to be the same individual.

[7] *C. I. L.* III. 8359.

[8] Not the Emperor of that name.

Alexander's name again appears[1]. Mammaea is honoured in Dacia by the Ala Frontoniana Alexandriana[2]. In Noricum there is an inscription in honour of Alexander set up by soldiers of the Legio II.[3] In Spain the inscriptions seem to be limited to one in honour of Mammaea, an inscription in set formulae erected by M. Titius Sabatina Rufus, a soldier of the Legio VII.[4] In Britain the Cohors I. Aelia Hispanorum Equitata in recording the erection at Netherby of a *basilica exercitatoria* speak of Alexander in loyal terms[5]. At Caerleon is an inscription apparently erected by a member of the Legio II. invoking the safety of the royal family[6]. In Gallia Narbonensis at Tarnaiae Nantuatum, Virius Probus of the Legio XXII. erects an inscription in honour of the "divine house[7]." In Africa the Vexillatio Legionis III. Aug. P. V. Severianae constructed baths at Cidamus[8], and other soldiers of the same legion built a Nymphaeum and twelve miles of aqueducts at Lambaesis[9], in Alexander's honour.

[1] *C. I. L.* III. 10984. [2] *C. I. L.* III. 798.

[3] *C. I. L.* III. 5575.

[4] *C. I. L.* II. 2664 (year 234): the inscription is much mutilated, but it is successfully restored.

[5] *C. I. L.* VII. 965. [6] *C. I. L.* VII. 103.

[7] *C. I. L.* XII. 144.

in hONOR • D • D •
GENIO • STA
tiONIS • VIRI
uS • PROBUS •
MILES • LEG • XXII •
ALEXANDER •
iaNE • P • F • IMP • D • N •
alEXANDERO •
Cos
(year 222, 226 or 239.)

The Legio XXII. was in Upper Germany with its praetorium at Mogontiacum: the inscription probably belongs to the high road from Mogontiacum to Rome via the Pennine Alps.

[8] *C. I. L.* VII. 1. [9] *C. I. L.* VII. 2685.

In addition to these representative examples of Alexander's inscriptions, many more, too mutilated or too laconic to admit of their being referred to any definite author, must have been erected by the army. It would be tedious and unnecessary to compose a complete catalogue of all the inscriptions that with probability or possibility have been attributed thereto. The foregoing review will suffice to show that the army both in Italy and throughout the provinces, after the custom of the age, frequently recorded its loyalty to the Emperor on stone. Frequently, but not so frequently as would be expected. In the case of Septimius and above all of Caracalla, the army in every region of the Empire had erected a multitude of inscriptions couched in the most laudatory terms; their inscriptions indeed may almost be numbered by hundreds[1]. Alexander, though he reigned for thirteen years, is honoured far less often and in less fulsome tones.

It would not indeed be just to argue from this fact alone, that Alexander was out of favour. Septimius and Caracalla received more testimonies of loyalty from the army than any other prince throughout the whole of Roman history, while many another Emperor was honoured as sparingly as Alexander. Moreover, Septimius and Caracalla were essentially generals, men at the head of the troops, continually in the soldiers' eyes, while Alexander was a mere boy, with little military training or experience, to whom the command of the army was not improbably distasteful. But the comparative rarity of inscriptions is not the only evidence of the military attitude. There are many indications to prove that Alexander's policy was not a success. The various incon-

[1] Cf. Ceuleneer, *Vie de Sévère*, p. 171.

clusive or improbable records of severity in handling the soldiery, with which this sketch of the Emperor's supposed reforms set out, suggest that military disorder was rife, but they are far from proving that Alexander was capable of assuaging it. As if to mock the schemes of Senatorial revival with which the army could have no possible sympathy, come half-veiled records of insurrection and mutiny from every side. To the murder of Ulpian, reference has already been made[1]. Essentially a jurist, secondarily a statesman, least of all a soldier, he seems to have taken but the smallest interest in military matters outside the sphere of discipline. His murder was the protest of the army against civilian rule, the disdainful rejection of a threatened bureaucracy[2].

It is undoubted that the assassination was the culmination of a series of events of deep import, although the exact history of his relations with the praetorians cannot now be reconstructed. The period of disaffection goes back to the beginning of the reign,—to the murder of Ulpian's colleagues, Flavianus and Chrestus. Zosimus[3] is responsible for the statement that these two officers were appointed by Alexander himself, but the statement, which lacks support, is rendered suspicious by the fact that Ulpian at the very beginning of the reign was appointed as superior colleague and quickly compassed their fall. Flavianus and Chrestus were στρατιῶται[4], probably members of the praetorian guard, and it is likely that they were elected to the prefecture by the praetorians themselves before the death of Elagabalus. Alex-

[1] *v.* p. 63.

[2] For authorities, v. Schiller, *Ges. d. Rom. Kaiserzeit*, I. 772–3; Dio, LXXX. 2–3; Zos. I. 11; Syncell. I. p. 673; Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LI. 4; Zon. XII. 15. Date probably early in 226. Cf. Clinton *ad ann.*

[3] I. 11. [4] Zos. I. 11.

ander at his accession, though his immediate advisers were opposed to the military caste, was not strong enough to supersede the prefects openly, and the appointment of Ulpian,—a civilian,—was the most he could attempt: it is highly probable that Flavianus and Chrestus fell in an early and unsuccessful revolt against the civilian influence, and that later disturbances arose culminating in that which overwhelmed the great jurist and for a time paralysed the government, while it rendered the praetorians supreme in Rome[1]. The final struggle was a furious one, and the battle which decided Ulpian's fate raged for three days in Rome. Though Alexander could not defend himself for long, it is clear that he was not without friends in this time of civil war. He was tired of the praetorians; their savagery and fickleness had disgusted his quiet and peaceful nature which, on the other hand, gained the affection and support of the vast civilian population of Rome. The battle in the streets was one fought by the untrained populace[2] in the cause of the Emperor and of order against the greed of the army for licence and authority. The result of the battle was a grievous revelation of the insecurity of the government and the power of the army; for though the people were successful for the moment[3], the praetorians at once adopted the malicious tactics of incendiarism and the people in alarm came to an agreement. Epagathus immediately afterwards laid Ulpian low and there was none to punish the assassin[4].

[1] Muche, *De Imp. Sev. Alex.* pp. 11 sqq.

[2] Dio, LXXX. 2, expressly states that it was the δῆμος which fought against the praetorians.

[3] Dio, l.c.

[4] Porrath (*Der Kaiser Alex. Sev.* p. 31) gives an entirely different account of the Civil War in Rome. He thinks that the death of Flavianus and Chrestus was the *immediate* precursor of Ulpian's assassination, and

Not dissimilar were the events which led to the retirement of Dio. Akin to Ulpian in his intellectual proclivities and in his strict enforcement of discipline, Dio also resembled him in his practical capacity. He had long been engaged in high positions of administration. Quaestor and aedile under Commodus, praetor in the first years of Septimius' reign, curator of Smyrna and Pergamus under Macrinus[1], consul and proconsul of Africa in the early years of Alexander's sovereignty, governor of Dalmatia in 226 and Pannonia Superior in 227[2], and consul again in 229[3], he had passed through many of the higher administrative offices and been connected with all the great political events of his time. But the severity of Dio's government of the army in Pannonia alarmed the praetorians[4], who approached the Emperor in fear lest they too might experience a like severity. The demand of the praetorians was plainly a menace, but Alexander at first stood firm and appointed Dio consul for the coming year. The praetorians however were too strong; fearing for Dio's safety and remembering doubtless the recent fate of Ulpian, Alexander ordered his fellow consul-designate to leave the city and spend the period of his consulship outside Rome. The historian

that the three days' battle took place at an earlier time. It is true that the wording of Dio's narrative lends some colour to the theory, but it is not credible that Ulpian could have exercised all the influence he did if he had been hampered by two hostile colleagues throughout his period of office; modern historians, almost without exception, agree that Flavianus and Chrestus fell at the beginning of the reign. It may, moreover, be noted that Dio, who was abroad on military service at the time of these events, appears to have been misinformed about them. His statement that Ulpian murdered the prefects *ἵνα αὐτοὺς διαδέξηται* cannot be accepted as accurate.

[1] Dio, LXXIX. 7.

[2] *Ib.* LXXX. 1.

[3] *Ib.* LXXVI. 16 and LXXX. 5.

[4] *Ib.* LXXX. 4, *ὅτι τῶν ἐν τῇ* Πανν*ονίᾳ στρατιωτῶν ἐγκρατῶς ἦρξα.*

retired to Campania and thence, after some friendly interviews with the Emperor, left Italy on the plea of an affection of the feet and departed to his home in Bithynia[1]. Thus by the insistence of a soldiery impatient of discipline a statesman was driven out of practical politics and a historian out of touch with an ill-recorded epoch which he would otherwise have illumined. The loss was a great one, great to Rome, greater still to after ages who remember with regret the curtailment of Dio's history. And it was typical; Alexander was unable to resist the demands of the army, however distasteful or unreasonable they might be.

The cases of Ulpian and Dio do not stand alone. Hints of further disaffection in Rome which occasionally appear in the historians[2] find practical illustration in Lampridius' narrative of the attempted revolution of Ovinius Camillus[3]. Camillus, he says, was a Senator of ancient family who attempted to assume the purple, evidently in Rome itself. Alexander, undisturbed at the prospect,—probably the cause of Camillus was not espoused by the praetorians,—summoned the rebel to the palace and there thanked him for his willingness to assume the cares of government from which many a good citizen had shrunk! The aspirant to the Empire was then conducted to the Senate and proclaimed a colleague of the Emperor. Shortly afterwards Alexander left Rome on a military expedition, but his colleague who accompanied him quickly tired of the discomforts and labours of the campaign and voluntarily abdicated. Alexander allowed him to retire to his country seat, where for a time he lived in safety; eventually however he was executed

[1] He was born at Nicaea in 155. Dio, LXXV. 15, LXIX. 17, LXXII. 7.

[2] E.g. Zos. I. 11; Herod. VI. 1. 8.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLVIII.

on the ground of his military connections. The narrative is improbable enough and can hardly be accepted, as it stands, for fact. Yet Lampridius, while admitting that the episode was popularly ascribed to the reign of Trajan and that Marius Maximus, Fabius Marcellinus, Aurelius Verus, and Statius Valens are alike silent on the point in their histories of Alexander, states that he takes the story from the authority of Septimius, Acholius and Encolpius and other of Alexander's biographers. Herodian is silent, Marius is silent, other confirmatory evidence is lacking; the details of the story are improbable. If it is necessary to express an opinion on the point, we may suggest that perhaps Alexander at some period of his reign may have been confronted with a rival in Rome who failed to carry the army with him; in such a case Alexander probably treated him temporarily with a show of forbearance, biding his time till the would-be usurper, deserted by all his adherents, might be executed with impunity after the custom of the age. The details are gone; the account given by Lampridius makes a good story, but it was never history[1].

Outside Italy we tread on firmer ground. Apart from the great upheaval of the Persian War, which was essentially external history, and apart from the final mutiny of Maximin which led to Alexander's assassination, there were several minor army risings. The desertion of large bodies of troops[2], Egyptians and Syrians, on the eve of Alexander's advance into Persia is all the more remarkable by contrast with the apparent enthusiasm with which

[1] Dio, LXVIII. 16, relates a somewhat similar incident concerning a certain Crassus in the reign of Trajan, and the statement of Lampridius that some referred the episode to Trajan's reign suggests that the whole story is an embellished réchauffé of that of Crassus.

[2] Herod. VI. 4. 7.

the war had been hailed in Rome, the reception accorded to Alexander in his new capacity as general, and the good order and discipline which Lampridius ascribes to the troops at the commencement of the campaign[1].

But the condition of the army in the East had long been unsatisfactory. Dio, in concluding his history[2], refers to the danger to Rome in Mesopotamia arising from the aspirations of the re-established Persian dynasty. That danger, he says, lay not so much in the strength of the Persian army which was waiting to cross the Euphrates, as in the state of the army opposed to it. For some years before the war, soldiers in the East had been deserting to the enemy or had no longer the will to contest his advance when it was made. More than this, undisciplined, uncontrolled, and degenerate through the luxury of an Eastern camp, the troops in Mesopotamia had revolted and killed their general, Flavius Heracleo[3]. This rising was probably something more than a mutiny; it appears to have been a definite rebellion aimed at the Emperor. For though Dio says no more, Aurelius Victor in the epitome is responsible for the statement that one Taurinus was proclaimed Augustus, and that he subsequently in fear of defeat drowned himself in the Euphrates[4]. There can be little doubt that the two narratives refer to the same epoch[5]. Apparently Junius Palmatus was entrusted with the suppression of the insurrection and succeeded in crushing it before much harm was done[6]. The rising in Mesopotamia does not

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* L. 3.

[2] Dio, LXXX. 4. [3] *Ib.* LXXX. 4.

[4] A.V. *Ep.* c. xxiv. "Sub hoc imperante Taurinus, Augustus effectus, ob timorem ipse se Euphrate fluvio abiecit."

[5] Cf. Duruy, VI. c. 93.

[6] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVIII. 1, "Actae sunt res feliciter...in Mesopotamia per Iunium Palmatum."

stand alone. In Illyria there was a similar revolt which may without doubt be regarded as a military one, and which was suppressed by Varius Macrinus[1]. At a later date, on the eve of the German War, there seems to have been further disaffection in that country on the ground of Alexander's neglect of the public safety in the conduct of the Persian War[2]. In Isauria there was discontent[3]. In Mauretania Tingitana a further rising was put down by Furius Celsus[4].

As to the details of these various insurrections we know nothing, but their existence is a sign of the prevailing feeling of unrest. Dio, in writing his account of the murder of Heracleo, is doubtless smarting under a personal grievance, remembering the consequences of his own sternness in Pannonia; but it is clear that he was aware of an atmosphere of insecurity in the Empire just prior to the date of his retirement. Judging from the tenor of his concluding chapters one would assign the various recorded insurrections to the same period,—that immediately preceding the Persian War.

A study of Alexander's coins confirms this view. Up to the year 228 the legends on the coinage vary considerably in their nature. From that year onward they become warlike in tone. In 228 Alexander, who previously had been "providus" or "aeternus," now appears armed

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVIII. 1.

[2] Herod. VI. 7.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVIII. 1.

[4] Lamp. *Alex. Ser.* LVIII. 1. The modern view is apparently that Furius Celsus, Varius Macrinus and Junius Palmatus, mentioned by Lampridius in connection with the troubles in Mauretania, Tingitana, Illyricum and Armenia, were the insurgents; but it appears to me that the whole tenor of the context demands that they should be regarded as the men who put down the rebellions. Lampridius speaking from the Imperial point of view would not otherwise have used the phrase "actae sunt res feliciter," etc. Cf. also my note on pp. 57 sq.

with shield and spear[1]. Romulus is depicted marching hurriedly with spear and trophy[2]. A soldier wearing a helmet stands upon a vessel's prow[3]. Mars appears with flowing mantle, or fully armed for war[4]. In the next year the same coins reappear[5], and Alexander is seen seated in a chariot with a Victory above[6]. So also in 230 Alexander seated is crowned by Victory while in front stands a military figure with a shield[7]. Coins of Mars Ultor and Mars Pacifer[8] together with coins bearing the legend VICTORIA AVGVSTI or VICTORIA AVG[9] belong chiefly to this year.

War was clearly in the air; the sudden reversal of tone in the coinage, always a reliable indication of the tendency of politics from the Imperial point of view, cannot otherwise be explained. The advent of the Persian War will not in itself account for the change; the inevitability of that war did not appear till after 230; the tendency of Persian history was problematical at Rome, a matter for apprehension rather than for instant military preparation. Without doubt the coinage reflects the feeling of disquiet caused by the unsettled condition of the army. In the legends and portrayals of Mars Ultor, and of Alexander as a warrior or a victor, we have veiled official reference to the various mutinies of the period and their suppression.

It may then be safely asserted that between the year 227[10] and the close of the Persian War,—a critical period

[1] Cohen, IV. Alexander, No. 355, 360.
[2] *Ib.* Nos. 351–4.
[3] *Ib.* Nos. 342–6.
[4] *Ib.* Nos. 331–41.
[5] *Ib.* Nos. 364–9, 375.
[6] *Ib.* Nos. 376–87.
[7] Eckhel, VII. p. 273.
[8] Cohen, IV. p. 418–9.
[9] E.g. Cohen, IV. Alexander, Nos. 555–8, 560, 562, 567, 571.
[10] The year of the battle of Hormuz, by which Ardeshir gained the Persian throne.

in the history of Rome when the safety of the Eastern provinces was in jeopardy,—the Emperor was harassed by successive insurrections in Mesopotamia and Armenia[1], in Illyria and in Mauretania. Such were the methods, such was the loyalty of the most loyal and best disciplined soldiery of the age!

But this was not all. Another attempt at king-making, which cannot definitely be dated, was perhaps still more formidable. If we credit Zosimus[2], two pretenders contested Alexander's throne, Antoninus and Uranius. According to that historian Antoninus soon abandoned his attempt through fear[3], and was succeeeded by Uranius, a slave, who was in turn captured and brought before the Emperor. The evidence of coins proves that Uranius and Antoninus were one and the same, and that his bid for empire was a bold one. There are extant Roman coins bearing the legends L · IVL · AVR · SVLP · VRA · ANTONINVS · CONSERVATOR · AVG, or FECVNDITAS · AVG, and L · IVL · AVR · SVLP · VRA..... MINERVA · VICTRIX[4]. One of these depicts a chariot conveying the black conical stone, the emblem of the Sun-god of Emesa. There is moreover a Greek coin of Emesa[5], bearing the legend ΑΥΤΟΚ · ϹΟΥΛΠ · ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟϹ · ϹЄΒ + ЄΜΙϹϹΩΝ · ΚΟΛΩΝΙ · ЄΙΦ[6]. The date of these coins cannot be

[1] Lamp. (*Alex. Sev.* LVIII. 1) refers to Armenia; the trouble there must have been part of the insurrection in Mesopotamia (Osrhoenae). Armenia was an independent kingdom under Chosroes.

[2] I. 12.

[3] Possibly Zosimus had in mind the episode ascribed by Lampridius to Ovinius Camillus.

[4] Eckhel, VII. 288; Cohen, IV. 503.

[5] Previously attributed to the Sulpicius Antoninus placed by the historians at the head of the list of the Thirty Tyrants.

[6] Eckhel, VII. 289; Schiller, *Ges. d. Rom. Kaiserzeit*, I. 786: the year ΕΙΦ of the Seleucid era (=1006–7 A.U.C.) can only be regarded as incorrect.

satisfactorily determined. They have been ascribed[1] to the first years of Alexander's reign on account of the star of Elagabalus which they bear, an emblem however which may be well enough accounted for by their connection with Emesa, the Sun-god's abode. It is more probable that these also date from the period of insurrection in Alexander's reign. But however this may be, it is evident that a Sulpicius Uranius assumed the purple in the East, took the names, Aurelius Antoninus, of the reigning house, usurped the imperial prerogative of coining money, and associated himself at least to some extent with the worship of Elagabalus[2].

Alexander's reign therefore was not, as Lampridius would have us believe, that of a great and beneficent Emperor living in an undisturbed and tranquil state, nor

[1] Cohen, IV. 89.

[2] The date and place of usurpation are admittedly doubtful, but it seems to me not improbable that this event also belongs to the rising in Mesopotamia of which Dio speaks. Herodian mentions that the deserters in Mesopotamia were Syrians who attempted to set up a new Emperor. (Herod. VI. 4. 7, *καινοτομῆσαί τινα ἐπιχειρησάντων περὶ τὴν βασιλείαν.*) Aurelius Victor refers to one Taurinus who was made Augustus in the East. Assume Taurinus to be a false reading for Uranius (the emendation is not a difficult one), assume Herodian's account of the desertions to be slightly post-dated, and one has a connected account of the Eastern insurrection. The Eastern army mutinies and kills its general; Sulpicius Uranius is appointed Emperor; he assumes all the rights of government till finally overcome by Junius Palmatus, when he takes his life and the peace of Mesopotamia is restored. The emendations and the assumptions necessary to bring the evidence of the Eastern insurrections into line so as to make one connected and intelligible story are perhaps too purely conjectural to win credence. The connection of Uranius with Dio's narrative, or of that narrative with the statements of Herodian on a similar subject, unconfirmed by evidence, is a matter for individual judgment, but the result of such a view is plausible. A single revolution of considerable magnitude in Osrhoenae, unsuppressed for perhaps a period of two years, with a rival Caesar at its head, would fully account for the national disquietude and the aggressive legends of the coins.

yet on the other hand was it a reign of continuous or dangerous insurrections. It was the mean between those two extremes. A half-hearted policy of reaction coupled with a moderate enforcement of discipline, carried out by a ruler popular but not exceptionally capable, sincere but not essentially thorough, sufficed to avoid for a period of thirteen years one of those cataclysms which are ever found breaking the continuity of Roman history. But it did not suffice to retard the decline of Rome or permanently to alter its method of government. For a moment Senate, Army, and Emperor were thrown out of their true perspective, but the change was merely tolerated on sufferance as the experiment of an Emperor whose initial popularity was more or less maintained by his industrious sincerity; yet it only required the influence of a Maximin upon the soldiery, in the cause of his own ambition, to cast the Principate once more into the melting pot and to plunge the Roman world into the perplexities and perils, the wars and tyrannies, through which it was its fate to steer its course.

CHAPTER V.

THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

INTEGRITY and precision in the administration of justice had always been the pride of Rome, but at no time more so than in the century which followed the reign of Trajan. That period represents the zenith of Roman jurisprudence and the perfection of that code which in later times became the basis of most systems of European law. Hadrian was largely responsible for the great impetus which jurisprudence received in his time. His reforms introduced something of bureaucracy and militarism into the state. New wants arose and the older fashions fell into disrepute, and men who had previously engaged in the pursuits of literature and art found more profit in administrative posts and in the study of the law. From Julian to Paulus juristic work was continually progressing; after Paulus little remained beyond the work of codification. Ulpian and his colleagues in the *consilium* were in fact the last of a long line of jurists whose works form the most prominent feature of literature and thought in Rome and who save the age from the accusation of intellectual mediocrity or worse. Julian, Pomponius, Caius and the Antoninian Jurists strictly so called were followed by Cervidius Scaevola, who still exercised his

profession under Septimius, in his turn to be followed by Papinian, Ulpian, and Paulus. Papinian is perhaps most famed in modern times for his high principles and his integrity: the words ascribed to him in his answer to Caracalla,—"that to defend the murder of the innocent is to slay him again,"—are epigrammatically characteristic of Papinian the man. But he was more than a man of high principles; the spirit of equity, the clearness and perspicuity, the keenness and depth of insight with which he wrote his *quaestiones* and *responsa*, make him the prince of jurists, and the apparent jealousy of his younger contemporaries who freely annotated and criticised his works did not suffice for long to obscure his reputation.

On his death under Caracalla, Ulpian and Paulus proved worthy successors in his work. Though Ulpian's writings almost cease on his promotion to the prefecture,—the cares of government and the ill-concealed discontent of the praetorians curtailed his literary activity,—yet before the accession of Alexander he had written not far short of two hundred volumes,—treatises on the *ius civile*, on the edict, on the functions of the magistrates, collections of responses and disputations, books of rules and institutions, in addition to various monographs. In all the greater treatises the same characteristics are observed,—a high order of doctrinal exposition and judicious criticism, above all an extraordinary lucidity of arrangement, style, and language. The writings of Ulpian, which supply something like a third of the excerpts in the Digest, are among the very greatest of the works which raised Roman law to its exceptional perfection of principle and detail.

Unlike Ulpian, Paulus was writing during the reign of Alexander; even his elevation to the prefecture after Ulpian's death interrupted but little the fertility of his

pen. Possessed of most of the distinguishing features of Ulpian, possessed above all of a similar diligence and perspicacity, he lacked the other's lucidity of diction. The saying, once common, "Lex Africani; ergo difficilis," would have been equally applicable to Ulpian's colleague. Despite this obscurity however, none will deny that Paulus was a great jurist. Nor did these leaders stand alone. Modestinus was preeminent among a considerable number of lesser jurists who sat in Alexander's *consilium* and carried on the juristic work by means of their responses and treatises alike.

The work of interpretation and exposition of the law was not however entirely in the Jurist's hands; the Emperor also participated in it. Though he had strictly no right of legislation, his power of authoritative interpretation was never questioned, and the boundary between interpretation and legislation was not distinctly drawn. In the Imperial constitutions,—rescripts and decrees,—a source of law is found scarcely less important in some cases than the actual legislative resolutions of the Senate. Nor were such constitutions rarely made. A state department was largely devoted to their management and issue[1]. In the Codex, Commodus is represented by some 190 laws, Caracalla by nearly 250, Alexander by about 450, Gordian III. by some 270, and Diocletian and Maximinian by not less than 1200[2].

The later years of Alexander's reign present a curious feature in regard to juristic literature. The work of the Jurists as such,—the legal treatises and responses,—which had been so prominent a feature of Roman law, decline in number, till with the death of Modestinus in the next decade they entirely cease. There was a marked

[1] Muirhead, *History of Roman Law*, p. 314.
[2] *Ib.* p. 413.

decline in legal ability during the following years, and this partly accounts for the change. But it is not true that jurisprudence sank suddenly and completely into utter darkness with the growth of absolutism following on Alexander's death; jurists were as numerous as ever; it is probable that the legal school at Berytus, so famous at a later date, was founded by Alexander. Rather the Emperors began to assume to themselves the jurists' *ius respondendi* and thus to magnify their own importance as the authors of constitutions. Jurists who hitherto had acted independently and published responsa on their own initiative, now retired into the *principis consilium* and were content simply to inspire the Imperial interpretations. They became the legal advisers of the Crown. The large number of Alexander's laws which date from the later years of his reign lead to the conclusion that he originated a practice which was soon to become general[1].

The number of Alexander's laws in the Codex is typical of his diligence and care, and there was no branch of the administration in which he could exhibit his sincerity with more safety; to sign and occasionally to emend rescripts and decrees, drawn up by perhaps the most capable body of jurists belonging to any age, was a task well within his capacities; and it was likely to bring him renown, for the Roman was legal in his attitude of mind, and intensely jealous of effective and careful administration in all judicial affairs. As to the individual constitutions of Alexander which are preserved, such as are important will be noticed in their place, but for the most part they deal, like the writings of the jurists, with branches of the civil law, and have no bearing on state policy.

But it is not merely as a law-maker or as a patron of

[1] For Alexander's part in legal practice, *v.* Herod. VI. 1. 6.

jurists that Alexander is conspicuous. His ardour for justice is more fully and more usefully reflected in the severity of his measures to ensure honesty and fidelity in the judiciary. The age was one in which the importance of legal procedure was continually exaggerated. The excellence of the statute book did not in Rome ensure the integrity of the courts, in which professional advocates, men very different in character from the jurisconsults, exhibited the rhetorical tricks acquired in the schools of oratory and succeeded often enough in "making the worse appear the better reason." Rome was, if anything, over-weighted by the volume of its legal work, and its courts were crowded by men whom long practice had taught to aim at effect, at solemn magnificence or infinite pathos, the sterile artificiality of which was no longer generally recognised. Yet in spite of the inadequacy of justice in the courts, parties continually appeared before them in civil actions. In a way Romans were litigious; they were continually seeking confirmation of rights which in other countries would have passed unquestioned. In the past confirmation had often been replaced by confiscation in the Emperor's name, but Alexander never descended to such an artifice. Bribery or partiality amongst his judges was suppressed. The *judices* capriciously appointed by Elagabalus were removed[1]. *Fures iudices*,—a term implying without doubt men guilty of corruption or peculation in the administration of justice[2], —were dismissed and punished; it is said that if Alexander met one of these, he would make as if to pluck out his eyes[3]. Septimius Arabianus, who had been convicted

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xv. 1.

[2] Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 221; cf. the phrase "fures aerari" in Sall. *C.* lii. 12.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xvii. 1.

of corruption and pardoned by Elagabalus, was so bold as to salute the Emperor; he dismissed him with a vehement exclamation[1]. Judges appointed or promoted by the Emperor for the provincial service received a suitable outfit in money and establishment, and if they performed their functions ill, they forfeited the amount fourfold, incurring at the same time liability to be brought to trial[2].

The question arises to what *iudices* these allusions of Lampridius refer. The *iudices* once empanelled to act as jurors in criminal cases no longer existed: the *iudices* appointed by the Senate to hear its *cognitiones* would hardly be interfered with by the Emperor. Citizen *iudices*, who were continually appointed by the praetor to hear civil actions under the formulary system of procedure which was still in vogue, may have come in for their share of condemnation. But the reference is probably in particular to the *iudices* holding delegated Imperial authority, whether they were the regular Imperial officials, the *praefecti praetorio*, *urbi*, *vigilum* and the provincial officers, or individuals specially appointed[3] by the Emperor to hear particular cases, criminal or civil, undertaken by him under the system of *cognitio extra ordinem*,—a system which at this time was continually growing in importance[4]. The whole subject is too obscure

[1] *Ib.* XVII. 3–4. [2] *Ib.* XLII. 4.

[3] There are, it is true, no known instances of such delegation of power under Alexander (Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 258), but that is no proof that Alexander did not make use of the practice.

[4] It is probable that many of these cognitiones were heard by members of the consilium principis: this was a legal body having no place in the formal constitution, but consisting of friends of the Emperor who assisted him in his work. Since Hadrian, members of the consilium had held the position for life; cf. Papinian, *Dig.* XXVII. 1. 30; *C. I. L.* VI. 1518; *C. I. G.* 5895; *C. I. L.* VI. 1634; Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 279 sq.

to admit of an authoritative decision, but it is at least evident that Alexander, in addition to carrying on vigorously the work of semi-legislative legal interpretation, reformed the Bench as constituted by Elagabalus, and strove to introduce a high standard of rectitude in the administration of justice throughout the Empire[1].

In the more general question of the enforcement of social morality, Alexander is seen at his best. His reign has been compared to a censorship, and though this frail youth seems but a feeble successor to those great men of old who had associated the name of censor with all that is highest in human nature, the comparison can hardly be denied him. The Court in Rome, the centre of government, the cynosure of fashion, the patron of literature and the fine arts, exercised the greatest influence over Roman society. That this should have been so is nothing more indeed than might have been expected. The *commentarii diurni* chronicled the doings of the Emperors even more effectively than the Court Circular and Society News in the modern newspaper the concern of which is mainly about people. Their equipages, their palaces, their retinues, the splendour of their entertainments, their patronage of literature and art, daily appealed to the senses of the vulgar, and more than sufficed to keep the sovereign continually in the public eye; and while the envy of many was excited, the example of their lives

[1] In the Imperial provinces, as at Rome, a good deal of judicial work was performed by Imperial delegates under varying forms of procedure. In the Senatorial provinces the head of the judiciary was the proconsul or propraetor, who was entirely responsible for criminal cases. Ulpian's *De Officio Proconsulis* is in reality a comprehensive exposition of the criminal law. There appears to have been a right of appellatio in the provinces, as at Rome, but it was sparingly used: the only cases we know of were those of St Paul and the Christians of Bithynia under Trajan,—in both cases on political charges.

must have had a still more potent influence for good or evil[1].

How powerful and enduring the influence of a Court can be is at once perceived if we recall how largely the purification of morals, the incitement to well-living, the advancement of liberty, and the regard for the poorer classes were promoted by the virtues of Queen Victoria's life, and the high moral tone which she insisted should characterise her surroundings. In the same way was Court influence and example reflected in national manners in the times of the Georges. In the same way it would be possible to reflect upon the severity and greatness of Cromwell's government, in contrast with the nauseous profligacy of the Restoration and the decadence of the national character; while if we look back to the spacious times of Queen Elizabeth, it would be seen that the influence of the Court permeated the life, and was reflected in the manners and customs of the people.

What is true in the case of England is even more applicable to Imperial Rome. There, amid the general spirit of languor and indolence, amid the degrading effects of state-aided pauperism, amid the social contrasts of a non-industrial city, the influence of the Court was magnified to a degree almost without parallel. The orgies of Elagabalus would be upon the lips of a whole city, in which Court scandal was the first and readiest substitute for the interests of industry; their history would spread from the Palatine to the Subura, and leave everywhere its evil trail. The refining influence of Alexander, though less readily imbibed, would spread scarcely less surely to all the quarters of the city. The peculiar circumstances of Rome made it particularly susceptible

[1] Cf. Friedländer, *Mœurs Romaines*, I. 51 sqq. and Galienus, *adv. Indoctos*.

to the dangers of a practically non-elective monarchy, and in the past it had had the ill fortune to be ruled by only too many reckless and dissolute men whose word was law though their caprice might spell disaster, and whose passing whims and enduring infamies were alike the mould of form. Alexander, the noblest of the Emperors of the period of decadence, effected for his own generation no benefit or reform comparable with that which his moral example silently compassed in the city which he governed.

He was not content however to allow things to proceed by a system of half-unconscious imitation; he endeavoured to quicken the national zeal for righteousness by direct legislation, social reforms, sumptuary restrictions, and the like,—of which many traces still remain. The courtesan population was banned[1]; the *exoleti* were in danger of expulsion[2]; actors and entertainers, who had long laboured under an unenviable notoriety, were tolerated but never honoured[3]; the extravagances of social life were set down for disapproval or reform[4]. Criminal justice was dispensed with equity, but its course was never diverted, as in previous reigns, by free pardons from the Crown[5].

Honesty among the Emperor's subordinates was rigorously enforced. A clerk who had prepared for the Council a false statement of a case had the sinews of his fingers severed so that he could never write again[6]. But Alexander was perhaps most severe of all in dealing with cases, common enough in Rome, of the acceptance of bribes in return for empty promises,—obtaining money, as it were, under false pretences. "Vendere fumos" was

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxv. 10, xxxiv. 4.
[2] *Ib.* xxxix. 2; cf. xxxiv. [3] *Ib.* xxxiii. 3, xxxvii. 1.
[4] *Ib.* xxiv. 2–4, xxxiii. 4, xl. 6, xli. 1–4, li. 6; cf. xl.–xliii., li. 1–3.
[5] *Ib.* xxi. 1. [6] *Ib.* xxviii. 3.

the technical term for the offence[1], and the frequency of its recurrence is typical of the evil influence which freedmen and adventurers of all kinds found it easy to exercise in the palaces. From the days of Sejanus, favourite after favourite had amassed huge fortunes out of Roman credulity, and these bloodsuckers had but seldom paid the penalty for their crimes. But under Alexander the traffic was a dangerous one. Lampridius records the crucifixion of a man who had taken a bribe of 100 aurei from a soldier in return for promises which he would not fulfil[2]. Equally severe was the punishment of Verconius Turinus. An intimate friend of Alexander, he had, like a second Zoticus, posed as the necessary advocate of every suitor, and unsuspecting Romans, with suits to press, first sought his aid; if by chance the suit was granted, he would extort a large reward. The deceit of Turinus was discovered by a ruse, and after a full investigation he was tried, condemned, and suffocated in the Forum Transitorium by smoke from surrounding fires. The public crier standing at the place of execution exclaimed:—"Fumo punitur qui vendidit fumum[3]." The play on words cannot be reproduced in English, but the story indicates a curious example of an attempt to make the punishment fit the crime.

The general principles of the administration of Rome and Italy were not altered by Alexander. The old system of Augustus under which the Senate had undertaken the general management of Italy without interfering with the local self-government provided for in the Lex Julia Municipalis, had indeed long become obsolete. On the one hand the Senate had proved itself incapable of its

[1] Cf. Martial, IV. 5. 7, "Vendere nec vanos circum palatia fumos."
[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXIII. 8.
[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXXVI.

task. On the other, the scheme of self-government had lapsed early in the second century owing to the decline of the commune-spirit, the local abuses in judicial and financial administration, and the unwillingness of Italians to assume the burdens of office[1]. Hadrian had laid the foundations of centralisation by establishing four *consulares* for the administration of justice[2], and Marcus Aurelius had carried on the process by the appointment of *iuridici* for the same purpose[3]. After Marcus local self-government continually declines and the *praefectus praetorii* becomes the Chief Justiciary of Italy[4]. The first step in the process of centralisation was the appointment of an Imperial *corrector*,—a permanent supervising functionary in each free city. That change was subsequent to Alexander by many years[5], but even in his reign the tendency is marked by the temporary appointment of similar officials[6]. A further sign of the times was the

[1] Cf. Plin. *Ep.* x. 113, "Qui inviti fiunt decuriones"; Marquardt, *L'Administration Rom.* I. 288 and II. 15.

[2] Spart. *Hadr.* XXII. 13.

[3] Capit. *M. Ant.* XI. 6, "Datis iuridicis Italiae consuluit ad id exemplum quo Hadrianus, consulares viros reddere iura praeceperat."

[4] Ulp. L. 1. pr. (*de Offic. Praef. Urb.*) *Dig.* 1. 42. Marquardt, *L'Administration Rom.* II. 18. It must be noted that from the time of the Antonines Italy comes to be regarded more and more as in a line with the provinces; Fronto, *Ep.* II. 11. After Caracalla, Etruria and Campania are actually styled provinces in inscriptions; Orelli, 3648; Arnold, *Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 155.

[5] It was introduced by Aurelian; Arnold, *Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 156.

[6] *C. I. L.* x. 3856, "L. Fulvio Antonino...electo ab optimo imp. Severo Alexandro ad dilectum habendum per regionem Transpadanam"; cf. *C. I. L.* x. 5398. Octavius Suetrius, consul in 214, appears shortly afterwards as electus ad corrigendum statum Italiae: it is not clear to what year this appointment relates, but it was earlier than Alexander. Cf. also *Eph. Ep.* I. 138, year 258, Pomponius Bassius elected ἐπανορθωτὴς πάσης Ἰταλίας. A wish for the Corrector system is seen in Ulpian, *de Offic. Procons.* Collat. XIV. 3. 2.

growing habit of appointing *curatores reipublicae* in the free and Senatorial cities. These officials were Imperial supervisors of less standing than the subsequent *correctores*, and their functions were those of audit and general superintendence[1]. First heard of under Trajan[2], they increased continually in number, and under Alexander they are found for the first time to possess a limited judicial power[3].

The administration of the city of Rome had been longer in Imperial hands. From the beginning of the Empire the Senate had failed properly to manage the public corn supply and the duties of police, and even under Augustus we find the administration transferred to the Palatine. Augustus appointed the *praefectus vigilum* and thus dispensed with half the services of the aediles. He appointed the *praefectus annonae* and his provincial curators and thus took over the management of the corn supply. In the next reign the *praefectus urbi*, who had been under Augustus a temporary officer, was made permanent, and the functions of the Senate in Rome practically ceased. In addition Augustus took over the Public Works Department[4], and divided Rome into fourteen *regiones* for purposes chiefly of religious celebrations[5].

This Imperial system of administration existed almost

[1] Orelli, 3787 = *C. I. L.* XI. 3614, and *C. I. L.* XIV. 24110. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, V. 389.

[2] Orelli, 3737 = *C. I. L.* XI. 3807, year 113.

[3] Cf. Cod. Just. VII. 46. 2, "Quanquam pecuniae quantitas sententia curatoris reip. non continetur, sententia tamen eius rata est, quoniam indemnitatem reipublicae praestari iussit." In *C. I. L.* VI. 1368, we find Calpurnius Dexter (cos. in 225) as Curator reip. Minturnensium.

[4] Augustus established "curatores operum publicorum" and a "curator aquarum." Tiberius added a Conservancy Board, "curatores riparum et alvei Tiberis."

[5] Dio, LV. 8.

unchanged till the time of Alexander who, while adopting its main features, effected some alterations which were not without importance. The office of the *praefectus frumenti dandi ex Senatus consulto*, probably the last remnant of the Senatorial management of the corn distributions, disappears. Quintus Petronius Melior held the office under Alexander[1], and he is the last of his kind. More important is the new application of the City District system which Augustus had introduced. At first the presidency of the *regiones* had been divided among the aediles, tribunes, and praetors, but these presidents were exchanged, probably by Hadrian[2], for curators under the *praefectus vigilum*[3]. Alexander's innovation consisted in appointing the curators from the Senate and forming them into a Committee under the *praefectus urbi*[4], who was also appointed from the Senate in this reign[5]. Thus the division into districts was placed upon a broader basis and extended beyond the purposes of religion, while Rome was for the first time provided with a district council for the management of its affairs. The competency of the council is of course difficult to define, but probably it would cover all but the judicial functions of the *praefectus urbi*, who roughly corresponds to a prefect of police with certain judicial powers[6]. While the council did not involve local

[1] Henzen, 6048. Marquardt, *Organisation Financière*, p. 164.

[2] Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 335.

[3] An inscription of Hadrian's reign (*Eph. Ep.* iv. n. 746) shows two curatores at the head of each region. As to the Praef. vigilum, v. *Eph. Ep.* iv. 4746 (dated 223), Magistri vicorum regionis viii per C. Iulium Paternum praefectum vigilum.

[4] Fecit Romae curatores urbis quattuordecim sed ex consulibus viros quos audire negotia urbana cum praefecto urbis iussit, ita ut omnes aut magna pars adessent, cum acta fierent. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxxiii. 1.

[5] *Ib.* xix. 1.

[6] Cf. Ulp. *Dig.* v. 1, xii. 1.

representation in the modern sense,—for the curators were appointed from the palace,—it at least implied a more intelligent and efficient working of the police administration[1]. The reform moreover appears to have been a lasting one; consular curators occur in inscriptions during the next century[2].

Apart from the innovations in the administrative system, Alexander is responsible for a considerable number of general measures and enactments, affecting Rome in particular and the provinces in a less degree, and exhibiting a marked desire for social and commercial improvements. The method of *adlectio* whereby he took the votes of the Senate before appointing a new member of that body, severely punishing any who betrayed his trust[3], and the measure whereby the public were called upon to declare any charge they had to prefer against a newly appointed official[4], would probably not commend themselves to modern statesmanship. Even less satisfactory was the inevitable regulation whereby the legal interest of capitalists was reduced to three per cent. and

[1] The evidence as to the date of the innovation is considerably obscured by the conflicting statements of historians, etc. Lydus, *de Mag.* II. 19, states that Domitian established a praefectus urbi for each of the twelve regions. Dio (LV. 8) appears to trace the new system back to Augustus:—*καὶ ἐκείνων καὶ τῶν δημάρχων τῶν τε στρατηγῶν, πᾶσαν τὴν πόλιν εἰς δεκατέσσαρα μέρη νεμηθεῖσαν, κλήρῳ προσταχθέντων· ὃ καὶ νῦν γίγνεται*, but it is by no means clear that his words do not refer to the old system, and if so they must have been written before, or without knowledge of, Alexander's reforms. Lampridius credits Elagabalus (*Elagab.*. XX. 3, voluit et per singulas urbis regiones praefectos urbi facere, ut essent in urbe quattuordecim) with a similar intention, which is probably a mere ante-dating of Alexander's innovation. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, V. 365.

[2] *C. I. L.* X. 6507, Cur. reg. VII. (under Constantine). *C. I. L.* XIV. 2078, Consularis sacrae urbis regionis IIII.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XIX. 2.

[4] *Ib.* XLV. 6, 7.

Senators were forbidden to lend at all[1]. But on the other hand the establishment of a Public Loan Department exacting interest at three per cent., with special terms for small investors in real estate[2], was a salutary measure. Similarly, doubtless for the convenience of traders, Alexander tried the experiment, unique in Roman history, of establishing a kind of national Safe Deposit[3]. In addition to the ordinary public warehouses[4] designed for the purposes of government only[5], he built warehouses in which Roman citizens could deposit their goods at will[6]. It is not stated whether there was a charge for storage, nor is there any inscriptional reference to these warehouses; the innovation was not of lasting importance, but its practical utility must have been considerable.

There is a hint, not very definite in its terms, that Alexander tried to improve the industry of Rome by attempting to attract bankers to the metropolis, but the result of his effort is not disclosed[7]. The encouragement of cooperation[8], and the formation, as we should say, of trades unions, is a matter of wider importance. The Vinarii, the Lupinarii (lupine-dealers), the Caligarii, and all the other "artes," according to Lampridius, were

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxvi. 2. [2] *Ib.* xxi. 2.

[3] Marquardt, *Organisation Financière*, p. 166.

[4] Horrea begin with Gracchus, and in addition to horrea for grain there were in the Empire horrea chartaria, candelaria, piperataria, and many others.

[5] Cf. *Cod. Theod.* xii. 6. 16, Non autem oportet in horreis fiscalibus nisi fiscalia frumenta constitui, cited by Marquardt, *l.c.* p. 165.

[6] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxxix. 3, Horrea in omnibus regionibus publica fecit, ad quae conferrent bona ii qui privatas custodias non haberent.

[7] *Ib.* xxii. 1, Negotiatoribus ut Romam volentes concurrerent maximam immunitatem dedit. The negotiatores (bankers, brokers, money-lenders) carried on a trade generally regarded as discreditable and often accompanied by grave abuses. Arnold, *Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 80.

[8] *Ib.* xxii. 3.

formed into unions by Alexander and provided with *defensores* chosen from the society to plead before specified courts[1]. Cooperation was by no means unknown in Rome; some of the trades had already grouped themselves into bodies with a *patronus*, while friendly societies, such as the military *scolae*[2], were common enough. But the direct intervention of the government under Alexander for the furtherance of commercial cooperation must without doubt have given at once an impetus and a feeling of security to trade[3]. It marked moreover the inception of a policy which the Roman administration had long avoided: *collegia* and *sodalitia* had always been regarded,—not without justification,—with considerable apprehension as possible sources of disaffection and conspiracy. The early Empire had been forced to recognise in some degree the growing desire for the formation of associations, and there is evidence of the conditional legalisation of funerary bodies at least as early as 136 A.D. But while an opportunity was thus provided for many bodies not strictly funerary to protect themselves by a nominal adhesion to the provisions of the law, the government concession was at first grudgingly granted, and when M. Aurelius expanded the policy, the enlarged privileges of the *collegia* extended only to the rights of receiving bequests and of granting emancipation

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXXIII. 2.

[2] *v. infra*, p. 211.

[3] The statement of Lampridius requires some modification, for some of the "artes" had been formed into "corpora" long before Alexander: in these cases he may be presumed to have effected a reorganisation. Neither is it likely that all the "artes" were dealt with by him. The statement of Lampridius is as usual loose and inaccurate, but it would be impossible now to discover the exact details of the reforms. See Friedländer, *Mœurs Romaines*, Supplement to vol. I. pp. 66 sqq., and the references there cited. See also Duruy, *History of Rome and Rom. People*, v. 408.

to their slaves. Alexander was really the first Emperor fully to recognise the obvious claims of the *collegia*. In doing so he carried out a much-needed reform, for the *collegia* in Rome and the provinces alike were the outward symbol of a great expansion of industry and of the tardy acknowledgement by Rome of the dignity of trade. In the result however the privileged *collegia* failed in their chief object and became under Imperial control nothing more than an intolerable system of caste servitude in the last century of the Western Empire[1].

There was a trace of socialism in the measures of Alexander for providing state-aided education. Vespasian was the first to provide salaries out of the public funds for rhetoricians[2], and the movement was continued until under Antoninus Pius we find the system widespread; in Asia alone a large number of professors, rhetoricians, and elementary teachers were then provided for by the cities in which they taught[3]. Alexander went farther; at Rome he paid public salaries to elementary teachers, rhetoricians, doctors, augurs, mathematicians, teachers of mechanics, and architects[4], and also provided them with schools, while in the provinces he gave assistance to the public advocates who worked without a fee[5]. A similar social-

[1] Cf. Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, pp. 254 sqq.

[2] Suet. *Vesp.* XVIII., Primus e fisco Latinis Graecisque rhetoribus annua centena constituit. Zon. XI. 17.

[3] Marquardt, *Organisation Financière*, p. 134 sq.

[4] The majority of such professional men were freedmen or other members of the lowest order: some obtained high fees, but for the most part they were regarded with some contempt. The doctors at any rate deserved it: the medical profession was at this time generally a cloak for charlatanry, and the ignorance and duplicity of quacks had become a grave social evil. It is to be presumed that Alexander's munificence towards members of these professions was accompanied by some discretion.

[5] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLIV. 4.

istic tendency is visible in the foundation for Pueri Puellaeque Mammaeanae[1] in honour of Mammaea. Such eleemosynary institutions date back to Trajan[2] who granted to poor orphans of free birth a share in the corn distributions: the system was carried on by Pius and Marcus Aurelius who made similar foundations for young girls,—Puellae Faustinianae[3]. Alexander was the next to add to their number. The maintenance was granted in the form of a *perceptio frumentaria*[4], but the total public expenditure under this head would hardly be felt; it would be very small in comparison with the huge sums annually disbursed on account of the distributions of corn.

The whole system of the corn distributions and the granting of occasional donatives has often been attacked on economic grounds. "The weakest point in the Empire," writes Professor Bury[5], "was its financial administration. The ancients had very little knowledge of economic causes and effects: but it is difficult to see how even they could fail to discern the results to which the cheap distribution of grain at Rome necessarily led. An immense sum was spent every year in order to keep bread cheap in a city where a variety of causes tended to make it dear. This singular system of annihilating capital and ruining agriculture and industry was so deeply rooted in the Roman administration, that similar gratuitous distributions of grain were established at Antioch and Alexandria and other cities." It is true that the system was inclined to spread; Ostia and Puteoli,

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVII. 7.
[2] Marquardt, *l.c.* 181 sqq.
[3] Capit. *Ant. P.* 8, *M. Ant. Phil.* II. Lamp. *l.c.*
[4] Cf. *C. I. L.* VI. 10222.
[5] Bury, *Student's Roman Empire*, p. 565.

apparently Gallia Narbonensis and Liguria, and at a later date Africa, enjoyed the indulgence, and so extensive was the business of supplying the corn in Rome, that granaries were established in Egypt, Africa, Britain, Pannonia, Lycia, and very likely in all the provinces, with this end in view, while occasionally in cases of exceptional emergency these stores were encroached upon for provincial purposes[1]. But granting the great waste of revenue and the false economic basis of the system, there is something to be said in its favour. Though living at Rome under the Empire was exceptionally costly, this was the cause rather than the effect of the distributions, for it was antecedent to it, and arose largely out of the days of street-rioting, from which Rome never recovered, and from the great influx of non-industrial foreigners in the early Empire. The corn distributions were a desperate, as well as a rough and ready, remedy,—but a remedy,—for a social dislocation, and the annual charge on the revenue,—say £700,000[2],—was not an intolerable burden, even in days when money had three times its present purchasing value[3] and the revenue of empires was small. Moreover it has been urged with some justice that the Annona established a strong tie between Rome and the provinces which fed her, bringing selfish motives into play on the side of equity and indulgence, so that even the most self-centred and careless of Emperors were prevented from tolerating misconduct in the governors of the countries which grew the "sacred corn[4]."

In any case cheap food was by the time of Alexander

[1] Ammian, xxviii. 1. 17. (Time Valentinian I.)

[2] Duruy, *History of Rome and Roman People*, v. 521.

[3] Friedländer, *Mœurs Romaines*, iii. 99.

[4] Arnold, *Roman Prov. Administration*, pp. 98–9 (=p. 112, 2nd edition).

so deeply rooted in the system of government as the means of curbing the dangerous instincts of a huge proletariat, that reform could no longer be expected. The Cura Annonae proceeded as before[1]; in addition to the cheap distribution of corn there were occasional free gifts of oil, salt, and wine as in preceding reigns[2], and Alexander introduced the further new practice of distributing free meat[3]. Lampridius also mentions three donatives[4] which should strictly mean three money gifts to the soldiers, but as we hear elsewhere only of two such gifts[5], and the inscriptions lend little colour to the idea of such generosity to the army[6], it is more probable that Lampridius is referring to money gifts to the populace. The "Chronographer of 354" provides a table of *congiaria*,—apparently money gifts,—granted by the various Emperors[7], in which the following details appear :—

[1] There is indeed little specific evidence, but the absence of definite witness to the contrary would be proof enough: cf. also Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXII. 2, and VII. 8. The functions of the Praefectus Annonae now extended beyond the supply of corn and included all kinds of commissariat. Cf. *C.I.L.* II. 1180, Spart. *Sev.* XVIII. 3. Sen. *de Brev. Vit.* XIX. 1. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, V. 342. It may be noted that Alexander restored the supply of grain in the granaries which Elagabalus had squandered. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXI. 9.

[2] Congiaria, *v.* the definition in Marquardt, *Organisation Financière*, p. 172. Cf. Spart. *Sev.* XVIII. 3. *v.* Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXVI. 1, Congiarium populo ter dedit. XXII. 2, Oleum quod Severus populo dederat quodque Heliogabalus imminuerat turpissimis hominibus praefecturam annonae tribuendo, integrum restituit.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXVI. 1, Carnem populo addidit. Cf. XXII. 7, 8. Meat however was not a favourite diet among the poor of Rome, who ate pulse or bread as the staple food. Cf. Tac. *Ann.* XIV. 24, Ipse exercitusque ut nullis ex proelio damnis, ita per inopiam et labores fatiscebant, carne pecudum propulsare famem coacti.

[4] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXVI. 1.

[5] In Herodian, *v.* p. 100.

[6] Cf. the nature of the inscriptions cited in pp. 122 sqq.

[7] Marquardt, *Organisation Financière*, p. 174.

Emperor	Denarii per head
Septimius	1100
Caracalla	400
Macrinus	150
Elagabalus	250
Alexander	600

These gifts granted to each of 200,000 persons[1] represent a vast spasmodic expenditure, and it will be seen that Septimius was by far the most generous of Emperors in his dynasty. This statement of the Chronographer is entirely in accord with the other evidence which testifies to the lavish manner in which Septimius pandered to the proletariat[2]:—it was his policy to do so.

It is without doubt to these same money gifts, rather than to any regularly organised distributions, that the *liberalitates* celebrated on coins refer. Of such gifts Caracalla is recorded on the coinage as having granted eight[3], Macrinus one[4], Elagabalus three[5], and Alexander five[6]. The gifts were made for the most part during the Emperor's residence in Rome and in celebration of some important event. Those of Alexander can be dated with some certainty. The first was in 222 on his accession[7]. The second may be dated probably in 224 and possibly

[1] Probably; *v.* Marquardt, *l.c.*, but see note 3 at Ceuleneer, *Vie de Sévère*, p. 147, and the authorities there quoted. Arnold (*Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 98) appears to hold that Alexander altered the number, but the point is not proved.

[2] Henzen, 6920, 6940. Dio, LXXVI. 1. 16, etc.

[3] Eckhel, VII. 213, etc.

[4] *Ib.* 238.

[5] *Ib.* 249, etc.

[6] *Ib.* 269, 271, 272, 276. Alexander's statement as to the *three* donatives may therefore be taken as inaccurate.

[7] Eckhel, VII. 269. IMP · C · M · AVR · SEV · ALEXAND · AVG · P · M · TR · P · COS · LIBERALITAS · AVGVSTI. Cohen, IV. Alexander, Nos. 107–116.

marks his marriage with Orbiana[1]. The third belongs to 226, but its occasion is unknown[2]. The fourth is of uncertain date between 226 and 233[3], and the fifth belongs without doubt to the latter year, and refers to the triumph on the conclusion of the Persian War[4].

Alexander's attitude, therefore, on the question of donatives was sufficiently uneconomic and probably not less politic; if the Roman populace received less consideration from him than from Septimius, they at least had no reason to complain, and Alexander can hardly be blamed for his perpetuation of a principle of administration which was established beyond recall. Moreover if he did pander to the city's appetite, there is some ground for the belief that he curtailed its amusements by economy in the number or the splendour of the public festivals[5].

[1] Eckhel, VII. 271. IMP · C · M · AVR · SEV · ALEXAND · AVG · LIBERALITAS · AVG · II. Cohen, IV. Alexander, Nos. 117–125. The date of the marriage is not definitely known, but Orbiana was alive and married in 226. *C. I. L.* X. 1654.

[2] Eckhel, VII. 272. Cohen, IV. Alexander, Nos. 126–131, esp. No. 126, which is dated. IMP · CAES · M · AVR · SEV · ALEXAND · AVG · LIB · AVG · III · PONTIF · MAX · TR · P · V · COS · II · P · P.

[3] Eckhel, VII. 272. Cohen, IV. Alexander, Nos. 132–140.

[4] Eckhel, VII. 276. Cohen, IV. Alexander, Nos. 141–145. Cf. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* C. LVII.

[5] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLIII. 3, 4. There is little evidence as to the nature and number of Alexander's munera. The Games were in essence to a large extent λειτουργίαι falling on the magistrates,—aediles and quaestors,—only part of the expense being borne by the state. The Munera (gladiatorial shows) were similar in regard to the incidence of expense, but they nevertheless cost the state many thousands of pounds each year (cf. Tertullian's polemic *De Spectaculis*, which is however one-sided in its view). Alexander is said (Lampridius, *l.c.*) to have appointed arcarios qui de arca fisci ederent munera eademque parciora, apparently restraining the number of munera and making them a direct charge on the Imperial Exchequer, but I am unable to find that these officers are elsewhere mentioned or that the statement of Lampridius can be confirmed. The old system of management worked well enough and

In turning from Rome and Italy to the provinces we meet with disappointment. Apart from the great works of Mommsen and Marquardt, and that of Arnold, the Roman provinces, far removed as they were from the centre of administration and ill-chronicled by the old historians, have met—not perhaps with an inadequate recognition of their importance—but at least with a treatment which is only too often perfunctory. Under Alexander their condition is known only in general terms. Lampridius indeed, turning for a moment from his Court gossip, gives some suggestive hints as to the Emperor's practice in the all-important question of the selection of provincial governors. In appointing *rectores* or *propositi* or *procuratores*[1], he called upon the public to declare any charge they might have against them, thus following the practice of the Jews and Christians in the appointment of their priests[2]. Nepotism in the appointments was never resorted to[3]. The *adsessores*,—professional advisers appointed to assist officials in their work,—were in this reign granted fixed salaries[4], and thus made permanent. Officials of this character, like Clerks of the Court in modern times, would without doubt be of the greatest service in correcting the ignorance or inexperience of newly-appointed ministers and judges. Tax collectors

was economical from the government's point of view, and it is unlikely that the change ascribed to Alexander can have been actually introduced. (It is possible that Alexander was compelled to provide some of the munera at the public expense. At first the magistrates had willingly undertaken the duty, but with the diminution of magisterial power and dignity, magisterial economy increased; under Constantine, and perhaps earlier, it was necessary to take measures to compel Senators to undertake the burdens of office: Zos. II. 38.)

[1] Lampridius defines procurator as rationalis, which was the later term for that revenue official.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLV. 6, 7.

[3] *Ib.* XLVI. 5.

[4] *Ib.* XLVI. 1.

were subject to frequent and instant removal[1], being regarded as a "necessary evil" at the best; from which meagre statement it may perhaps be concluded that the collection of the revenue in general was conducted on equitable lines.

But these indications do not carry us far. Of the actual officials who acted under Alexander we know but little. Dio was governor of Dalmatia and Pannonia, and Herodian possibly held subsidiary posts in this reign[2]. Other leading Senators of the time,—Sabinianus, Seleucus, Aelianus, Crispinus, Dexter, Lucius Albinus, Aemilius Aemilianus, Tacitianus[3], Vitalis[4],—though they may appear in inscriptions with a full list of honours attached to their names, are for the most part names and nothing more. Perhaps the most illuminating ray of light thrown on the government of the provinces lies in an utterance of Ulpian's[5], on the duty of governors towards their subjects:—"it is a sacred duty not to allow the powerful to do wrong to the humble, nor to deprive the poor of their lantern or scanty furniture." Was that a sentiment inspired by the Emperor, or a comment on the opposite methods of the day, or was it unrelated to current history? It may not be entirely fanciful to suppose that it was an ideal to which Alexander clung.

Provincial coinage proceeds in this reign as in the previous ones, but it throws no light on a dark subject. Dio for a brief moment shows us the Lugdunum of his day: the great festival assembly there in which Nero had once participated still continued[6]. So also from Gaul

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLVI. 5.

[2] *v.* Volckman, *De Herodiani vita scriptis fideque.* 1859.

[3] Cf. *C. I. L.* III. 8359.

[4] Cf. *C. I. L.* III. 13723.

[5] *Dig.* XVIII. 6. Duruy, *Hist. of Rome*, etc., v. c. 93.

[6] Dio LIV. 32, *προφάσει τῆς ἑορτῆς ἣν καὶ νῦν περὶ τὸν τοῦ Αὐγούστου βωμὸν ἐν Λουγδούνῳ τελοῦσι.*

come some lesser inscriptional references[1], one of which is no less homely than a note upon a vase of a pawnbroker's transaction[2]. Noricum, in addition to a few minor inscriptions[3], has left an interesting record of the functionaries and members of a Sodalicium Bacchicum Vernaculorum, a society curiously reminiscent of those which called forth the famous Bacchic inscription of the

[1] *C. I. L.* v. 4241. Brixia, 224.

IOVI · O · M ·
CONSERVATORI · POS
SESSIONVM · ROSCIOR
VM · PACVLI · AELIANI · N̄ · C̄ŌS̄ ·
ET · BASSAE · FILIORVMQVE ·
EOR · EX · VOTO · L ·
ROSCIVS · EVBVLVS · NVTRIT ·
ET · PROCVRAT · CVM · P · ROSCIO ·
FIRMO · LIB · PROC · EOR ·

in latere :— D · IIII · NON · MART ·
IVLIANO · II · ET · CRISPino
COS ·

C. I. L. v. 56. Pola (Regio X.).

Q · MVRSIO · Q · f
PLINIO · MINERviano
IIVIR · PATRI · Col
COLL · DENDROPHorum
OB · MERITA · EIVS · Ex aere
CONLATO · L · D · d d
EXEMPLVM · DECREti
M · NVMMIO · SENECIONE · ALBINO · AIAELIO ·

Though the last line is very illegible, the consuls seem to be those of 227.

[2] *C. I. L.* v. 8122. 1. Gaul (unknown place), 234.

VRBANO · ET · MAXIMO · COS
PRI · KAL · IAN · ACCIPET · VERINUS ·
XII · S.

probably signifying that on the date stated Verinus pawned his vase for twelve and a half sesterces.

[3] *C. I. L.* III. 5587, 5690.

Republic[1]. A *decurio*,—Marcus Aurelius Epictetianus,—is found at Aquincum in Pannonia Inferior in 223[2], while in the distant region of Thyatira we find a mention of L. Aufidius Marcellus, the colleague of Alexander in the consulship in 226[3]. The curiously autocratic nature of the constitutions of many Italian cities is evidenced by an inscription of Canusium dated 223 A.D.[4] Therein we find the record of a sitting of the city's Senate, 120 *decuriones* being present. First in precedence of rank are the Patroni; next the ex-magistrates; then the Quinquennalicii and the Allati inter Quinquennalicios: these are followed by the Duumviralicii, Aedilicii and Quaestoricii: next come the Pedani, men who had not yet held office; and finally twenty-five Praetextati, youths gaining legislative experience but possessing no vote.

In the East there are a considerable number of inscriptions of some historical importance: of these the principal one is a long inscription from Palmyra[5]. Aurelius Zenobius was "general" there at the time of the Persian War, and attached himself closely to Rutilius

[1] The inscription is a lengthy one, chiefly embodying names of members, and beginning: Quod bonum felix faustum. Albino et Maximo consulibus, nomina Bachii vernaculorum per principes. C. Sentio Verano buleuta, T. Ulp. Herma sacerdos, C. Valerius Valens filii Valerianus et Valentianus arcarius, M. Ulpius Iulianus frater Ulpius Dionysius librarius legionis archimystae, etc.

[2] *C. I. L.* III. 10481, compared with 10570.

[3] *Bulletin de Corresp. Hellén.* 1887, Dec.

[4] Mommsen, *Insc. Neapolit.* 625.

[5] *C. I. G.* 4483. Palmyra. *ἡ βουλὴ καὶ ὁ δῆμος* Ἰούλιον Αὐρήλιον Ζηνόβιον, *τὸν καὶ* Ζαββδίλαν, *δὶς* Μάλχου *τοῦ* Νασσούμου, *στρατηγήσαντα, ἐν ἐπιδημίᾳ θεοῦ* Ἀλεξάνδρου *καὶ ὑπηρετήσαντα παρουσίᾳ διηνεκεῖ* Ῥουτιλλίου Κρισπείνου *τοῦ ἡγησαμένου καὶ ταῖς ἐπιδημησάσαις οὐηξιλλατιῶσιν, ἀγορανομήσαντά τε καὶ οὐκ ὀλίγων ἀφειδήσαντα χρημάτων, καὶ καλῶς πολιτευσάμενον, ὡς διὰ ταῦτα μαρτυρηθῆναι ὑπὸ θεοῦ* Ἰαριβώλου *καὶ ὑπὸ* Ἰουλίου [Φιλίππου] *τοῦ ἐξοχωτάτου ἐπάρχου τοῦ ἱεροῦ πραιτωρίου καὶ τῆς πατρίδος, τὸν φιλόπατριν τειμῆς χάριν. ἔτους δνφ.* (=year 994–5, A.U.C.)

Crispinus, commander of the army in the East. Palmyra was a flourishing city at this time, an important depôt on the trade route between Rome and Parthia. Through that centre passed the caravans which carried on the industrial relations of the West with the far East,—even with so remote a country as China,—relations long established and now forming no inconsiderable portion of the commerce of Rome[1]. First occupied by the Romans in 106 A.D. it was visited by Hadrian[2] who opened up additional trade routes, and henceforth the mention of its caravans is frequent[3]. Made a colony by Septimius Severus, it became the base of Alexander and Crispinus during the Persian War. In Egypt also we find a colony in being[4]. Antinoe was a Greek colony founded by Hadrian, and the inscription which it erected after Alexander's death in relation to his Persian victory preserves a mention of its Senate[5] and an eparch, Honorianus[6], in command.

But the curtain is raised only for a brief moment, to be quickly lowered again. The records of the provinces

[1] Reinaud, *Sur les relations politiques et commerciales de l'Empire Romain avec l'Asie orientale pendant les cinq premiers siècles de l'ère Chrétienne.* 1863.

[2] *C. I. G.* 4482. Steph. Byz., p. 498.

[3] *C. I. G.* 4489, *οἱ συναναβάντες μετ' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ Φοράθου ἐκ 'Ολαγασιάδος.* Marquardt, *Administration Romaine*, II. pp. 361 sqq.

[4] *C. I. G.* 4705. Antinoe, Dec. 232 or Jan. 233. *'Αγαθῇ Τύχῃ. Αὐτοκράτορι Καίσαρι Μάρκῳ Αὐρηλίῳ Σεουήρῳ 'Αλεξάνδρῳ Εὐσεβεῖ Εὐτυχεῖ Σεβαστῷ καὶ 'Ιουλίᾳ Μαμμαίᾳ Σεβαστῇ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀηττήτων στρατοπέδων ὑπὲρ νίκης καὶ αἰωνίου διαμονῆς αὐτῶν καὶ συμπάντος αὐτῶν οἴκου, ἐπὶ Μηνοῦου 'Ονωριάνου ἐπάρχου Αἰγύπτου, ἐπιστρατηγοῦντος Σεουήρου Οὐλβίου Αὐρηλιανοῦ, 'Αντινοέων νέων ἡ βουλὴ 'Ελλήνων, πρυτανεύοντος Αὐρηλίου 'Ωριγένους τοῦ καὶ 'Απολλωνίου, βουλευτοῦ, γυμνασιάρχου καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν στεμμάτων καὶ ὡς χρηματίζει, φυλῆς 'Αθηναΐδος. ἔτους ιᾱ Τυβί——*

[5] Cf. *C. I. G.* 4679, *ἡ βουλὴ ἡ 'Αντινοέων νέων 'Ελλήνων.*

[6] Honorianus is not otherwise known.

belonging strictly to Alexander's reign are necessarily few and spasmodic[1], and it is rather through the writers of the period and the general study of provincial history that the condition of the provinces during the years in which Alexander was Emperor must be determined. Not a little valuable information lies in the writings of the Christians, — Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, — though their works are often polemical in style and highly coloured, if not exaggerated, in their reviews of social life. It is clear however from the general drift of such information as remains that, though industry was highly developed (the subdivision of labour is a proof of that), —provincial prosperity was nevertheless steadily on the decline. The plaints of Tertullian find an echo from time to time with increasing earnestness, until Cyprian gives vent to the melancholy words,—"The time has grown old; men decline in number and efficiency, husbandmen in the country, sailors on the sea, soldiers in the camp[2]." The state of the peasantry throughout the Empire had long been miserable. The famous words of Pliny in which he ascribes the ruin of Italy to the Latifundia were only too true: the lesser landed proprietors could not compete with their great capitalist neighbours and as a class they gradually disappeared, while a steady current of immigration into the towns intensified the depopulation of the country districts. Already the *coloni*, the villeins[3] of the Roman Empire, were becoming numerous; Marcus

[1] The Digest, containing large excerpts from Ulpian, is chiefly useful from the constitutional point of view, although *indirectly* it conveys considerable information as to the general condition of the provinces.

[2] There is a note of exaggeration in Cyprian's words; from the time of Cicero's Verrines there was a frequent tendency among the champions of the provinces to over-accentuate their grievances.

[3] There is a striking analogy between the position of the Coloni and that of the medieval serfs.

Aurelius, even Augustus himself, had transplanted vast numbers of the conquered to opposite ends of the Roman dominions where they became "servi terrae," like the "glebae adstricti" of a later time. Hampered by fixed charges and extraordinary exactions, lacking protection against the arbitrary cruelties of their lord, these lowest members of the free community gradually came to present a spectacle of unalleviated wöe[1]. Nor was the depression confined to the poor. The ever-increasing burden of taxation, uncombined with any material increase in the revenue, points to the fact, confirmed by other evidence, that the wealth and prosperity of the provinces, once so firmly established, were steadily decreasing. Though it was only some half century later that the problem became acute, there were in Alexander's reign ample indications of the necessity for reform; but we look in vain among his enactments for any statesmanlike measure to alleviate the advancing distress.

The Imperial system of administration had remained too long in a fixed groove for any hope to exist of radical reform in Alexander's day. The system however, while in the earlier period it conferred undoubted blessings on the provincials, was far from being satisfactory. Mr W. T. Arnold has well summarised its defects:—"Ideally Rome's true aim should have been to prepare the peoples to stand by themselves, to civilise and organise them so as to be fit for freedom. The wholesome tendency was in the direction of independence, the dangerous and fatal tendency in the direction of a bureaucratic centralisation. It was however inevitable that the latter tendency should prevail. The power of self-government can only be got

[1] Arnold, *Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 160 sqq. (=pp. 176 sqq. 2nd edition), and the authorities there cited, especially Savigny's Essay on the Coloni: also Mommsen, *Rom. Provinces*, I. 237.

by use and practice; and there was no self-government except in the towns. On the one side the central government, on the other side the municipia; those were the only centres of political life. 'A Roman province with its municipal life was far above a satrapy, though far below a nation[1].' That is very true, but municipal towns without federation have little power of self-defence, and will fail in the hour of need[2]." The system of centralisation which the Antonines had so strongly accentuated was in no way checked by Alexander[3].

As has been pointed out elsewhere, the maintenance of the state religion, as opposed to that of the oriental cults which were in the hands of distinct priesthoods, was the concern of the government. There was great need for reform at the accession of Alexander; the God Elagabalus had been elevated to a preeminence which violated the ordinary fundamental principles of ancient religious toleration, and his reduction to the ordinary level of the Eastern deities was a matter of instant urgency for any ruler having the honour of Roman associations at heart. Herodian states explicitly that this reform was effected at the very beginning of the reign[4], and though

[1] Goldwin Smith, "The Greatness of the Romans," *Contemporary Review*, May 1878, p. 333.

[2] Arnold, *Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 120 (=p. 136, 2nd edition).

[3] A noteworthy tendency of the day was that which was leading public opinion to regard Italy as a province. As early as Marcus Aurelius, the idea is found in literature. Front. *Ep.* II. 11. After Caracalla, Etruria and Campania are definitely described as provincial: Orelli 3648. But the complete provincialisation of Italy was reserved for Diocletian. The division of the civil and military power in the provinces, consummated by Diocletian and Constantine and supposed to have been commenced by Alexander, is discussed at p. 198 sqq.

[4] Herod. VI. 1. 3, *πρῶτον μὲν οὖν τὰ ἀγάλματα τῶν θεῶν ἅπερ ἔτυχεν ἐκεῖνος κινήσας καὶ μεταγαγὼν ἔπεμψεν ἐς τοὺς ἀρχαίους καὶ ἰδίους ναούς τε καὶ σηκούς.*

Lampridius misses an opportunity of thus eulogising the piety of his hero and maintains a strange reticence on this subject[1], the evidence of coins confirms that of Herodian. Elagabalus had described himself on his coinage as SACERDOS DEI SOLIS ELAGABALI and SVMMVS or INVICTVS SACERDOS AVG.[2] As if in direct contradistinction, Alexander sets upon some of his coins the legend SACERDOS VRBIS[3], while on the others which bear the legend ROMAE AETERNAE Alexander is shown as standing sacrificing at an altar in front of a temple containing a statue of the Goddess Roma[4]. Though details of the reforms are lacking, the general inference is plain enough[5].

Closely allied to the state religion is the Emperor-worship which forms, especially in the more distant provinces, so marked a characteristic of Imperial times.

[1] The only references in Lampridius seem to be, XLIII. 5, Capitolinum septimo quoque die cum in urbe esset ascendit, templa frequentavit: and LI. 1, Dona regia in templis posuit. On the other hand Lampridius speaks of Alexander as honouring the oriental religions: XXVI. 8, Isium et Serapium decenter ornavit additis signis et deliacis et omnibus mysticis.

[2] Eckhel, VII. 249. Cohen, IV. Elagabalus, Nos. 126–129. Cf. *C.I.L.* III. 892 : VI. 31776, etc.

[3] Eckhel, VII. 270. Cf. the coins of Sextus Valerius :—SACERDOT· VRBIS · ROMANAE · AETERNAE ·

[4] Cohen, IV. Alexander, Nos. 519–526 and 361 and 20–1. There is a similar coin of Alexander and Orbiana : Cohen IV. p. 479.

[5] Lampridius says that Elagabalus stole the Palladium from the Vestals: if so, Alexander must have restored it. Alexander did not destroy the barbarian fetish representing the Sun-god Elagabalus; as already pointed out (see p. 32) it would probably have been regarded as a breach of international law to do so. Lanciani hoped to find the fetish when excavating in Rome, but failed to do so, and it appears that it was unearthed in 1730 during excavations carried on by Duke Francis of Parma, and that, its nature not being understood, it was thrown away or destroyed. (Lanciani, *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, p. 128.)

Not that such worship was an innovation only coeval with the Empire; the provincials had been in the habit of erecting shrines to eminent Roman generals and governors for years, if not centuries, before[1]. Nor yet was the Emperor-worship a contemptible superstition. French scholarship in modern times has done much to elucidate its true significance, and the conclusion of a French authority may be cited in its defence:—"A chaque fois le culte de l'Empereur avait eu l'habileté de s'appuyer sur des traditions respectables et des aspirations légitimes, de se confondre avec elles et de les faire tourner à son profit. Il représentait au chef-lieu de la province ce qui restait de la nationalité des peuples soumis, il résumait la vie municipale dans la cité, il donnait le moyen au commerce et à l'industrie d'obtenir les distinctions qu'ils souhaitaient et dont ils étaient privés. On le regarde ordinairement comme un des produits les plus honteux de la servitude; il a été au contraire assez adroit pour lier partout sa cause à cette de la liberté[2]."

That which rendered Emperor-worship possible and necessary was the inadequacy of the Roman religion[3]. The Eastern creeds lacked the national spirit, the worship of the old gods lacked the emotional factor. Upon what religion were men to fall back? Was it to be the Goddess Pecunia or the Genius Portorii Publici, or a selection from the stereotyped abstractions such as Sator, Segetia, Nodutus, Patelana, Lactans, Robigus, Stercutius, Spiniensis, Sterquilinus[4], or the host of other cacophonous divinities, the creation of a crude imagination? Anything so cold and irresponsive failed to gain a hold

[1] Taylor, *Constitutional History of Rome*, p. 420.
[2] Boissier, *Religion Romaine*, p. 188.
[3] F. W. H. Myers, *Classical Essays*, III. p. 189 etc.
[4] Cf. Myers, *l.c.* Marquardt, *Le Culte*, p. 20 sqq.

upon the people of the provinces. The reverence of the Italian peasantry for its greater gods never died away and the religion of the provincial was never interdicted by Rome, but western forms of worship failed to satisfy, and their deficiencies led to the development of the spirit of patriotism into a semi-religious creed. At first the old city heroes, the Reguli, the Cincinnati, and the Horatii, became the gods of the common people; while later, after the establishment of the Empire and the disappearance of the old Republican spirit of exclusiveness within and of territorial expansion without, the worship of Rome and of her typical heroes naturally developed into worship of the Emperor, the first representative of the Roman offices and the Roman name.

The Emperor-worship was in fact something more than the mere unintelligent adoration of a man. It was an approach to an Imperial religion; it was the spirit of loyalty to the great power of Rome; in Italy it was the spirit of imperialism, in the provinces it was the sign of submission to the World Power. Everywhere it was a vigorous expression of the common aspirations and the homogeneity of the Empire,—a common bond in a confederacy of states which might assume the desire to separate. And if that desire arose, how should the Empire remain?

In the Emperor-worship however there was a point of defect. Beginning as the apotheosis of the dead and as a natural movement of popular feeling, it came also to embrace the worship of the living and to embody the Imperial claim to a divine right of despotism. The Eastern religions which became so prominent in Rome at the beginning of the third century favoured by their essential tenets the absolute right of the sovereign, and the Imperial support which they received shows the

tendency of the times. Emphasising the "Genius Caesaris" at the same time that they took the titles of *pius*, *felix*, and *invictus*, the Emperors were seeking to assimilate the worship of themselves to the worship of the Eastern Sun gods to whom the same titles belonged; they were attempting to suggest that their sovereignty was dictated by fate and derived from the personal grant of the Omnipotent. The most impudent of these attempts was that of Elagabalus. By establishing his Baal of Emesa in the Capitoline and proclaiming its ascendancy over all the gods of Rome, he was asserting also his own divine right, derived immediately from the indisputable sanction of the god whose high priest he was. The worship of the living Emperor possessed therefore in Alexander's day a significance very different from the worship of the dead. That this was perceived by Alexander becomes clear from the words of Lampridius,—"Alexander forbade worship of himself[1]": the old worship of the "Divus Augustus" was properly allowed to continue, but at least an attempt was made to sweep away the tyrannical claims hidden beneath the worship of the living. It was a reform springing from Alexander's character, natural in himself, but incapable of perpetuation. In later reigns the worship of the living Emperor is found again unaffected by its temporary prohibition.

In modern eyes the step from the supervision of religious worship to the maintenance of the Public Works is a long one. But not so in the eyes of the government of Rome: each was a care of the state, and each had one and the same practical aspect, the glory of Rome and the retention of the intellectual and artistic associations connected with the Roman name. Whether it be the

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XVIII. 3, Idem adorari se vetuit. He was however worshipped in his lifetime, *C. I. L.* VI. 2017.

founding of a shrine, or the building of a public hall, or the appointment of an Augustalis, each was an administrative concern with the same ultimate object. And so we may pass without undue abruptness from the maintenance of religion to the question of public works.

The latter duty in Rome and Italy had been withdrawn from the Senate by Augustus, and from his time onwards there appear numerous bodies holding delegated powers in this sphere. Of these the chief were the *Curatores aedium sacrorum locorum et operum publicorum tuendorum*, the *Curatores aquarum,—alvei et riparum Tiberis et cloacarum urbis,—viarum Italiae*[1]: at the same time the Senate retained some similar powers, though it is not clear to what official they were entrusted[2]. In the provinces the work was chiefly managed by provincial bodies, but the more essential questions, such as the repair of roads or aqueducts, could be dealt with at the command of the Roman magistrates[3], though the expenses of such works were none the less a charge upon the dwellers near them[4]. Other public works were almost entirely a charge on the Treasury, and the cost was a heavy one.

A casual perusal of the Augustan histories impresses the reader with a lively sense of Alexander's architectural aspirations, and that impression is fully borne out by the further and better evidence of coins and inscriptions alike. In the first place coins of the year 223[5], bearing

[1] *C. I. L.* VI. 1368, (Dexter) Curator viae Aemiliae.

[2] Cf. *C. I. L.* VI. 1270, Senatus populusque Romanus clivom Martis pecunia publica in planitiem redigendum curavit.

[3] Ulp. *Digest* XLVIII. 3. 8. 17 and 25. Cf. a S.C. of A.U.C. 741, quoted by Frontinus.

[4] Ulp. *l.c.*

[5] Eckhel, VI. 270. Cohen, IV. Alexander, Nos. 468–9. No. 247 (year 223), showing an amphitheatre with three figures, may well refer to the

the legends IMP·C·M·AVR·SEV·ALEXAND·AVG·P·M·TR·P·II·COS·P·P· and IMP·CAES·AVR·SEV·ALEXAND·AVG·PONTIF·MAX·TR·P·II·COS·P·P·, show on the reverse an amphitheatre with three figures and a *meta sudans* on the right, and the side view of a temple and gladiators fighting on the left; these betoken the restoration in that year of the Amphitheatrum Titi[1], the building known to posterity under the proud name of the Coliseum. In the time of Macrinus that great edifice had been fired by lightning and almost wrecked[2]. The work of restoration was undertaken both by Elagabalus and Alexander[3]. How much of that work fell to the latter cannot now be determined; probably it was carried on without intermission through the two reigns until its completion, but one would conjecture that the restoration was not final, for a coin of Gordian III., struck only a few years after the death of Alexander,

same restoration. The following passage in Walpole's Letters (letter to R. West, Oct. 2, 1740) is remarkable:—"One of my medals is...a curiosity: 'tis of Alexander Severus, with the amphitheatre in brass; this reverse is extant on medals of his, but mine is a medagliuncino, or small medallion, and the only one with this reverse known in the world; 'twas found by a peasant while I was in Rome, and sold by him for sixpence to an antiquarian, to whom I paid for it seven guineas and a half." I am not aware that this medallion is still extant, but it would seem without doubt to refer to the Coliseum: very many medallions and coins mentioned in literature between the 16th and 18th centuries have since been lost: Benvenuto Cellini, for instance, mentions several imperial medals, etc. now no longer known to exist.

[1] Lampridius (xxiv. 3) explains how the necessary funds for this and similar works were obtained. Lenonum vectigal et meretricum et exoletorum in sacrum aerarium inferri vetuit, sed sumptibus publicis ad instaurationem theatri circi amphitheatri stadii deputavit.

[2] Dio lxxviii. 25, *τό τε θέατρον τὸ κυνηγετικὸν κεραυνοῖς...βληθὲν οὕτω κατεφλέχθη, ὥστε τήν τε ἄνω περιβολὴν αὐτοῦ πᾶσαν καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ τοῦ κύκλου ἐδάφει πάντα κατακαυθῆναι, κἀκ τούτου τὰ λοιπὰ πυρωθέντα θρανσθῆναι.*

[3] Lamp. *Elagab.* xvii. 8, Amphitheatri instaurationem post exustionem. *Alex. Sev.* xxiv. 3.

represents the Coliseum and bears the legend MVNIFICENTIA GORDIANI AVG, from which we may presume further renovations at that date[1].

In the second place the building of baths, referred to by Lampridius[2], is confirmed by coins from which it is seen that they were of great size and importance. Cohen refers to seven coins[3], some dated 224 and 226, which show on the reverse a large building, the upper part making a kind of triple triumphal arch with statues and trophies set therein, the lower part being ornamented with arcades running inwards and ending in lateral blocks in two stories surmounted by statues: below in front is apparently a large open space or basin with an object the character of which it is difficult to determine. There are slight differences of representation on one of the coins, but the essential features are the same in all, and there can be no doubt that the coins refer to the Thermae Alexandrianae which adjoin the baths of Nero[4]. Alexander also commenced the building of a portico of spacious dimensions connecting his baths with the Septa[5].

In addition Alexander restored the Stadium and the Theatrum Marcelli[6]. The latter of these works was with-

[1] *Dict. Antiqu.* s. v. Amphitheatrum. *v.* also Lanciani, *Destruction of Ancient Rome* (Eng. trans.), p. 28.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxxix. 4, xxv. 3, Thermas nominis sui iuxta eas quae Neronianae fuerunt, aqua inducta, quae Alexandriana nunc dicitur.

[3] Alexander, Nos. 102–4, 297–8, 483–4. The building was probably completed in 226. Cf. Hieron. *Chron. Ann.* 2242, Alexandri 5°. Thermae Alexandrinae Romae aedificatae. Cf. Cassiod., His coss. (sc. Alexander and Marcellus) Neronianae Thermae Alexandrinae vocatae sunt :—a confusion. *v.* also Clinton *ad ann.*

[4] Many ancient buildings were demolished to supply material for later edifices. The Baths of Alexander suffered in this way. Their marble was requisitioned by Alexander VII. to restore the Pantheon. Lanciani, *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries*, p. 157.

[5] Lanciani, *l.c.*, p. 97. [6] *C. I. L. l.c.*, Lamp. *l.c.*

out doubt a great undertaking[1]. That theatre, originally built by Caesar and dedicated by Augustus[2] to the young Marcellus,—Quantum instar in ipso!—and calculated to hold some 20,000 people, seems to have received no thorough restoration during the first two centuries of its existence. Another work of considerable interest in modern eyes is the completion by Alexander of the Baths of Caracalla by the addition of colonnades[3]. The principal part of that vast structure (which still stands with its *sudarium*, its *tepidarium*, its *piscina* and its *stadium* recognisable, though the uses of the lesser rooms can no longer be determined) had been carried out in the reign of Caracalla; more was done by Elagabalus, but Alexander was responsible for the finishing touches. In the Coliseum and the Baths of Caracalla we have the greatest of the monuments which bridge the ages between Alexander and ourselves[4].

In addition a restoration, possibly of the Circus Maximus, is known to us by an inscription[5]. Diaetae,—

[1] In another passage (Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XLIV. 7) Lampridius seems to imply that this work was only planned (theatrum Marcelli efficere voluit); but there can be little doubt that it was actually effected.

[2] Mon. Ancyr.

[3] Thermae Antoninae. Spart. *Carac.* IX. 9. Lamp. *Elagab.* XVII. 9. *Alex. Sev.* XXV. 6, Antonini Caracalli thermas additis porticibus perfecit et ornavit.

[4] Lanciani found in the Baths of Caracalla in 1881 a rough inscription, written probably in 221 by a superintendent, possibly of the wardrobe department, with a list of servants at the baths and their hours of duty. Lanciani, *l.c.* p. 93.

[5] *C. I. L.* VI. 1083,

IMP · CAES · DIVI · ANTONI · MAGNI ·
PII · FEL · DIVI · SEVERI · NEPOS ·
M · AVRELLIVS · SEVERVS · ALEXANDER ·
PIVS · FELIX · AVG · PONTIF · MAX · TRIB · POT · IIII · COS · P · P ·
RESTITVIT.

It belongs to the year 225 and was found in the Circus Maximus under the Aventine Hill. Cf. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXIV. 3. But the fact

or kiosks,—were built in the palace in Mammaea's honour and under her name[1], while there is an inscriptional reference to the restoration of a beautiful house in the Greco-Roman style of architecture at the corner of the Street of Vesta[2]; but the building of a Basilica Alexandrina, referred to by Lampridius, near the Campus Martius, seems never to have been carried out[3]. Alexander is said however to have placed colossal statues in the city[4], the same probably as the statues of the Emperors placed in the Forum Transitorium with an inscription embodying the history of the originals[5]. Other works were on a different scale. The construction of a palace and of artificial lakes at Baiae[6] was not confined to Alexander: nor was the building of houses[7], though the free gift to the Emperor's friends of such houses when built was more consonant with Alexander's character than with that of his predecessors. There is also a reference to the ornamentation of the palace with a new

that the inscription was found in the Circus is no definite proof that it properly belonged there. Inscriptions in Rome are often found at a great distance from the place at which they were originally erected.

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXVI. 9. These Diaetae form one of the latest additions to the palace of which we are cognisant. Lanciani, *l.c.* p. 116.

[2] *Eph. Epigr.* IV. 745. Lanciani, *l.c.* p. 151. An inscription relating to another restoration, apparently of some importance, has been found near the Arch of Constantine. *Eph. Epigr.* IV. 747.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXVI. 7, Basilicam Alexandrinam instituerat... quam efficere non potuit, morte praeventus.

[4] *Ib.* XXV. 3.

[5] *Ib.* XXVIII. 6. The erection of statues was really a senatorial function, carried out by a senator delegated for the task. Probably Alexander was only responsible for the proposal, not the execution. Cf. Capitolinus, *M. Ant. Philosophus* II. 5 and III. 4; and *v.* Mommsen, *Droit Public*, VII. 408.

[6] *Ib.* XXVI. 9.

[7] *Ib.* XXXIX. 3.

marble[1], but Alexander's remaining architectural works belong to Italy and the provinces.

Here we find three mentions of newly-erected baths, in Moesia[2], in Pannonia Inferior[3], and in Africa[4], two mentions of reparations to markets, in Africa[5] and in North Italy[6], and a restoration of some baths in Moesia[7]. A granary was restored by the army in Britain[8], where also it seems that a temple was restored by a military official and dedicated to the Ala I. Hispanorum[9]. Netherby also saw the erection of a *Basilica Equestris Exercitatoria*, a term which explains itself[10]. An aqueduct

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxv. 7. Alexander is said to have meditated, but not to have effected, a further trifling alteration. Spart. *Sev.* xxiv. 5.

[2] *C. I. L.* III. 7473. [3] *C. I. L.* III. 10489,

IMP · CAESAR ·
M · AVR · SEVERVS ·
Alexander p f aug
BALNEVM · A · SOLO ·
TERRITORIO · LEG ·
II · A · D · P · F · S · FECIT ·
CVRANTE · FL ·
MARCIANO · COS.

[4] *C. I. L.* VIII. 2714 (Lambaesis).

[5] *C. I. L.* VIII. 1406 (229 A.D.) : the reparation of this Macellus is carried out by the township of Thignica itself.

[6] *C. I. L.* V. 1837. From Julium Carnicum in Cisalpine Gaul.

EX · INDVLGENTIA ·
SACRA · DOM · N̄ · INVICTI ·
IMP · M · AVR · ALEXAND · AVG ·
MACELLVM · RESTITVTVM ·
CVRANTE · FALERIO · FALERIANO ·

[7] *Eph. Epigr.* II. 355.

[8] *C. I. L.* VII. 732, 225 A.D., Greatchesters.

[9] *C. I. L.* VII. 510.

[10] *C. I. L.* VII. 965. Year 222.

IMP · CAES · M · AVRELIO ·
SEVERO · ALEXANDRO · PIO · FEL · AVG ·
PONT · MAXIMO · TRB · POT · COS · P · P · COH · I · AEL ·
HISPANORVM ∞ EQ · DEVOTA · NVMIN ·

was restored in Macedonia[1] and another built in Africa[2]. And there are two further inscriptions from Britain[3] and from South Italy[4], too mutilated to be safely restored, but clearly referring to the maintenance of public works, while in Spain the construction of some unknown building was apparently carried out[5]. There are also some provincial coins which may refer to restorations effected under Alexander. A coin of Heliopolis in Coele-Syria, with legend IMP·C·SEV·ALEX·I·O·M·COL·HEL·, shows a temple with six columns approached by a flight of steps[6]. A coin of Caesarea (Phoenicia) shows a round temple with a tripod on which is placed a great vessel between two torches[7]. A coin of Tyre shows a side view of a temple with many columns[8]. Such represent-

MAIESTATIQVE · EIVS · BASELICAM ·
EQVESTREM · EXERCITORIAM ·
IAM · PRIDEM · ASOLO · COEPTAM ·
AEDIFICAVIT · CONSVMMAVITQVE ·
SVB · CVRA · MARI · VALERIAM · LEG ·
AVG · PR · PR · INSTANTE · M · AVRELIO ·
SALVIO · TRIB · COH · IMP · D · N ·
SEVERO · ALEXANDRO · IMP · D · N ·
AVG · COS ·

[1] *C. I. L.* III. 709.
[2] *C. I. L.* VIII. 2658.
[3] *C. I. L.* VII. 585.
[4] *C. I. L.* X. 3342.
[5] *C. I. L.* III. 4660.

IMP · CAE
M
SEVERUS
PI
FELIX · AVG
TIFEX · MAX
TRIB · POTES
COS · PROC
FECIT

[6] Cohen, IV. 472 (Alexander, No. 693).
[7] Cohen, IV. 473 (Alexander, No. 695).
[8] Cohen, IV. 474 (Alexander, No. 797).

ations on provincial coins are not, however, uncommon, and in these cases they do not necessarily imply restorations.

The work however does not end here; administratively speaking such buildings and restorations were of far less importance than the maintenance of existing bridges, walls and roads. This was essential alike for commercial and military purposes, and it is not therefore surprising to find that, while the cost of these works was borne by the people, the work itself was regularly carried out by the army as part of its most ordinary duty[1]. So important was the function considered that even the veterans were not exempt from it[2]. Septimius, a warrior constantly traversing the highways of Europe, had been keenly alive to the importance of the roads. Solidly built and excellently planned so as to unite the whole Empire by a net-work of communications, they had for their primary object the facilitation of the marches of the legions, and the token of complete subjection in a foreign country was the construction of such main roads as would make it pervious to the arms and authority of the conqueror. Septimius knew, better perhaps than any Emperor of the period, the magnitude of the question, and more than fifty inscriptions of his reign testify to the attention he bestowed upon it[3].

Under Alexander the authorities were scarcely less alive to the necessity for diligence in this matter. Lampridius contents himself with a general reference to the restoration of the bridges of Trajan[4], while inscriptions

[1] Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, p. 316 sqq.

[2] *Digest*, XLIX. 18. 4, Viae sternendae immunitatem veteranos non habere Iulio Sossiano veterano rescriptum est.

[3] Ceuleneer, *Vie de Septime Sévère*, p. 256. Cf. W. T. Arnold, *Rom. Provincial Administration*, p. 16.

[4] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXVI. 8. He makes no mention of roads.

refer to the building of walls or enclosures at Casinum[1], and of *muri paganicenses* at Kherbet Gidna in Africa[2], as also to the restoration of bridges in Asia Minor, in Moesia, and at Praeneste[3]. But the inscriptions relating to roads are far more numerous. In the East an inscription from Mopsuhestia (Missis) shows the construction of a road from Pylae to Alexandrea in Cilicia[4]. In Macedonia a road near Dyrrhacium was repaired[5]. In Pannonia

[1] *C. I. L.* x. 5175.

[2] *C. I. L.* VIII. 8828.

[3] *C. I. L.* III. 12169, near Arabissus,

IMP · CAESAR ·
M · AVRELLIVS · SEV
erVS · ALExander
PIVS · FELIX · aug · TR
IB · POTEST · COS ·
P · P · VIAS · ET · PONT
ES · VETTVSTATE ·
CONLAPSAS · REST
ituiT ·

III. 12211, on the road from Melitene to Comana in Cappadocia.

III. 12519 (234 A.D.), from an unknown road in Moesia.

x. 6893. The last mentioned restoration was effected by Alexander *sua pecunia.*

[4] *C. I. L.* III. 226.

[5] *C. I. L.* III. 709.

IMP · CAES ·
M · AVRELIVS · SEVERVS ·
ALEXANDER · PIVS ·
FELIX · AVG · AQVAE
DVCTVM · DIVI ·
HADRIANI · PARENTIS ·
SVI · LIBERALITATE · DVR
RACHINIS · FACTUM · ET ·
VETVSTATE · PLVRIBVS ·
IN · LOCIS · VEXATVM · RESTI
TVIT · SET · ET · VIAM · A · CO
LONIA · PER · MILLIA · PASSVVM ·
QVATTVOR · VORAGINIBVS...

The inscription is incomplete.

Inferior lesser roads were similarly treated[1], while the restoration of the great road from Aquincum to Sirmium is repeatedly recorded[2], as well as that of the road from Aquincum to Brigetio[3]. Similar inscriptions come from Galatia[4]. In Pannonia Superior there is an inscription at Brigetio[5]; there are also two of the road from Emona to Neviodunum[6], and one of the road from Aquincum[7]. Moesia is represented by two and Dalmatia by one further inscription[8]. In Italy the main road from Capua to Rome is restored[9]. In various parts of Africa further work of the same kind was carried on[10]. Gaul on the other hand leaves no record of road-making, while Spain and Germany seem only to have been favoured in a small degree[11]. It appears that on this question, as on most others relating to the provinces, Alexander, like Septimius, gave his first consideration to the East and often neglected the western districts[12].

[1] *C. I. L.* III. 3715, 3719, 3721, 3731, 3738, 3703.

[2] *C. I. L.* III. 10628–30–33–50–2.

[3] *C. I. L.* III. 10655, 10657.

[4] *C. I. L.* III. 14184, 14120, 14142, 12169, 12211.

[5] *C. I. L.* III. 10984.

I · O · M · PRO · SALVTE · D · N ·
IMP · CAES · M · AVR · SEVER ·
ALEXANDRI · P · F · AVG · C · IVL ·
MAXIMINVS · C · LEG · A · A · SEV ·
TEMPLVM VICALEM · A SOLO ·
IMPENDIS · SVIS · CEMENTO · EX
STRVCTVM ·
EX · VOTO · RESTITVIT.

[6] *C. I. L.* III. 11331, 11335.

[7] *C. I. L.* III. 13499.

[8] *C. I. L.* III. 12519, 13758, 12683.

[9] *C. I. L.* X. 6944.

[10] *C. I. L.* III. 10018, 10137, 10181, 10225, 10226, 10264, 10309, 10470, 10471.

[11] *C. I. L.* II. 4660. *C. I. Rh.* 1957, 1960.

[12] *v.* p. 196.

Though constructed above all for military purposes, the main roads also contributed to the development of industry and commerce. Under Septimius the continual increase in means of communication had combined with the long peace which followed his civil wars, to produce a considerable expansion in trade. The history of the coinage, one of the several sources of information on this difficult subject, points to a flourishing trade with the peoples by the Red Sea and even with the inhabitants of India, while the prominence of Palmyra, which played an important part in the Persian War, was not merely military; the city was a great and flourishing centre of exchange between the East and West[1]. This activity was without doubt continued in the reign of Alexander, in spite of the feeling of insecurity which at times prevailed; and the occasional references of the historians to his encouragement of trade would find their justification even more in the provinces than in Rome itself. But the prosperity was rather one which affected those Romans resident in the provinces and the richer classes of the communities; it was far from sufficing to stave off that gradual decline which was beginning to make itself felt by the population at large.

We may pass from this review to the question of finance. In the first place, for many years before the accession of Alexander, the Roman Emperors had in turn been confronted with, and had in turn shrunk from, the solution of a difficult problem, that of the currency[2]. The old historians seldom refer to the urgency of the

[1] Similarly there is a Customs Tariff from Colonia Julia Zarai published by Septimius in 202, which is very significant of the activity of trade. Renier, *I. A.* 4111.

[2] In the following paragraphs I have chiefly relied on Mommsen's *Hist. of Roman Currency*, and Cohen, vol. IV.

matter, and it is only as the result of modern research that the state of the mint under the Empire has been discovered. By the time that Alexander ascended the throne the question of the coinage, long acute, had become critical. Looking backwards one may see two centuries of fraud in which the debasement of money had gradually but surely proceeded; in the future something little short of national bankruptcy awaited the Roman world unless measures were forthwith adopted to ward off the evil day. Septimius had left the same legacy to his successors through his treatment of this question as through his military policy, for under him the debasement of the currency had suddenly and alarmingly increased.

To realise the acuteness of the problem it is necessary briefly to trace the history of the coinage from the beginning of the decline. In the later Republican period the right of striking coins had been divided between the generals and the Senate, the latter deputing the management of their mint to the *tresviri monetales*, who formed in effect a select committee of that body[1]. With the advent of Caesar and his extraordinary magistracy the

[1] This system of delegation continued without intermission. There is a reference to a III-vir Monetalis of the present period in *C. I. L.* x. 3850 (year 235).

L · TI · CLAVD ·
AVREL · QVIR ·
QVINTIANO ·
TRIVMVIRO · MO
NETALI · A · A · A · F · F ·
QVAESTORI · CAN
DID · PRAET · COS ·
PONTIF ·
TI · CL · FELIX · IIVIR ·
AMICO · INCOMPAR ·
L · D · D · D ·

privilege both of Senate and generals was encroached upon, but it was left to Augustus to cement the Imperial tendency by depriving the generals of their coining rights and restricting the prerogative of the Senate to the issue of copper coin. Under the settlement of Augustus the striking of gold and silver currency belonged to the Emperor, the Senate being concerned only with the minting of copper,—an arrangement plainly designed as part of the general policy of Augustus for establishing a nominal Dyarchy, but less fully adapted to his purpose than most of his reforms. The power of the Senate, even when thus restricted, could be very effectively exercised in impeding serious debasement of the more valuable coins. For any excessive debasement of gold or silver without corresponding reduction in the intrinsic value of smaller coin, is liable to lead only to general confusion, and the refusal to accept payment in the higher forms of currency. Possibly however Augustus was far-sighted enough to see that the Senate, having everything to gain, would be as willing as the Emperor proved to be to have recourse to fraud; at any rate, though the arrangement of Augustus remained continuously in force for many generations[1], the Senate failed to exercise the power which had been placed in its hands.

Political economy was not yet even in its infancy in Rome; no ordered science of economics such as is familiar to modern minds had ever been evolved among the ancients. The exact nature and function of money was

[1] Taylor (*Constitutional Hist. of Rome*, pp. 434 and 453) states that Nero deprived the Senate of the right of coining copper. But this was not the case. He made some attempt to do so but failed, and it was not till the days of Aurelian that the Senate lost its right. Mentions of Tresviri monetales in inscriptions and the continuance of the letters SC on copper coinage are among the indications which prove this. *v.* Mommsen. *Hist. de Monnaie*, III. pp. 11 sq.

generally misconceived, and its differentiation from wealth would have appeared a paradox. But it did not require the aid of an Adam Smith to enable governments of old to discover the advantage in the control of the mint or the device of debasing coinage or lowering the standard; "profligate governments have until a very modern period seldom scrupled, for the sake of robbing their creditors, to confer on all other debtors a licence to rob theirs, by the shallow and impudent artifice of lowering the standard; that least covert of all modes of knavery, which consists in calling a shilling a pound, that a debt of a hundred pounds may be called a debt of a hundred shillings[1]." The history of Roman coinage under the early Empire is a record of continuous devices of this kind. Reduction of weight and use of alloy were the means adopted in the first stages of the decline. From the time of Nero to that of Septimius, the intrinsic value of silver and copper coinage alike declines with certainty and regularity, though the decline in copper is proportionately less than that in silver.

So far however there had been little depreciation of gold and no lowering of the standard, and the policy of the mint does not appear to have led to any serious inconvenience in industrial circles. It remained for Septimius to effect changes of which the prejudicial effect was immediately felt. Septimius has long escaped censure for the part he played in his attitude towards the currency. De Ceuleneer, for instance, in his Essay on Septimius applies terms of high eulogy to his economy and management of finance, without even hinting that much of the apparent saving which he effected was due to the issue of debased coin in discharge of his encumbrances. "Cette prévoyance de Sévère mérite les plus

[1] Mill, *Principles of Pol. Econ.* vol. III. c. 7, § 2.

grands éloges, et c'est à juste titre qu'il se declare: *Munificentissimus providentissimusque princeps.* Malgré toutes ces largesses et malgré les sommes énormes que Sévère consacra à la construction de nouveaux monuments et à l'entretien d'anciens édifices, il sut si bien gérer les finances publiques qu'au rapport de Dion, il laissa à sa mort non quelques mille drachmes faciles à compter, mais bien des millions de drachmes[1]." How many of these millions of drachmae were saved by the issue of debased coin? How many of his largesses and of his expenses in building new monuments were met by defrauding the national creditors?

Under Septimius the debasement of copper was considerable, but the depreciation of silver was far greater. There was no reduction of the standard, the nominal value remaining as before, and the gain to the Imperial treasury must have been very large, while the confusion created was so great that a distinction began to appear between Severan and ante-Severan coins, the old ones being preferred not only in the provinces but even in Italy itself. The depreciation involved a serious consequence. The authorised circulation of silver alloy was an immediate incentive to private forgers to utter false coin. The practice seems to have grown up even under Septimius, and to have flourished with no efficient check for a century or more, until the stringent laws of the years 326, 356, and 371[2] effected some amelioration. The condition of the currency was plainly deplorable and the blame lies with Septimius. But worse was to follow, for Caracalla and his successors, so far from introducing any reform, allowed events to take their course. The next step was inevitable and it came in 215; Caracalla

[1] Ceuleneer, *Vie de Septime Sévère*, p. 148.

[2] *Cod. Theod.* IX. 21. 3, 23. 1; II. 21. 4.

reduced the weight of the *aureus*, the gold unit, by some ten per cent. Macrinus made an attempt to restore the old weight, but Elagabalus again reduced it. The entire issue of new coinage had now become base; bearing a fictitious value, it was simply "monnaie de compte." Significant indications of the fact now begin to appear. Orders for payment begin to specify not only the amount payable in sesterces, but the nature of the coin in which it shall be paid[1]. And Elagabalus issued a decree that the *vectigalia* should be paid in gold[2]. Of this decree the implication is clear; though the weight of the *aureus* had just been reduced to ten per cent. below the previous fictitious standard, that coin was the best coin of the realm. Silver or copper was in fact refused by the government which had issued it. That refusal by itself would not necessarily imply a national danger; the position might indeed be paralleled within certain limits by the position of the English currency to-day. But a real danger lay behind the ever-quickening growth of the depreciation combined with the feeling of insecurity which it is known to have produced.

Such was the condition of the currency when Alexander succeeded to the throne. In any nation it would be a menace to the safety of the national credit; in an Empire which had no paper money and in which coin was the only medium of exchange it was disastrous. Though the volume of trade was less in the Roman Empire than in a modern industrial state, it was greater than in any previous community, and far greater than in any contemporary one; yet this industry was momentarily threatened with confusion, and already in the outlying parts of the

[1] Mommsen, *l.c.* p. 143.
[2] Cf. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXXIX. 6.

Empire relations with the extra-Roman tribes had been seriously impaired[1].

The chief witnesses to Alexander's attitude towards the coinage problem are the coins themselves, of which a large number are extant. But it will be well first to consider such secondary evidence as there is. This is comprised in a single paragraph of Lampridius[2] and in the legends of certain coins. Lampridius states (in a passage which has been the subject of much controversy) that Alexander having reduced the *vectigalia* to one-thirtieth of their former amount, so that men who under Elagabalus paid ten *aurei* now paid one-third of an *aureus*[3], issued pieces of the value of a half and of a third of an *aureus*: that he struck also some pieces of the value

[1] Mommsen, *l.c.* p. 149. Cf. the following passage from Finlay's *History of Greece* (I. 52), cited by Bury (*Student's Roman Empire*, p. 566). "The laws which regulate the distribution, the accumulation, and the destruction of wealth, the demand for labour, and the gains of industry, attest that the depreciation of the currency was one of the most powerful causes of the impoverishment and depopulation of the Roman Empire in the third century."

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXXIX. 6. Vectigalia publica in id contraxit, ut qui decem aureos sub Heliogabalo praestiterant, tertiam partem aurei praestarent, hoc est tricensimam partem. Tuncque primum semisses aureorum formati sunt, tunc etiam, cum ad tertiam aurei partem vectigal desidisset, tremisses, dicente Alexandro etiam quartarios futuros, quod minus non posset. Quos quidem iam formatos in moneta detinuit exspectans ut si vectigal contrahere potuisset et eosdem ederet, sed cum non potuisset per publicas necessitates, conflari eos iussit et tremisses tantum solidosque formari. Formas binarias ternarias et quaternarias et denarias etiam atque amplius usque ad libriles quoque et centenarias, quas Heliogabalus invenerat, resolvi praecipit neque in usu cuiusquam versari; atque ex eo his materiae nomen inditum est, cum diceret plus largiendi hanc esse imperatori causam, si cum multos solidos minores dare possit, dans decem vel amplius una forma triginta et quinquaginta et centum dare cogeretur.

[3] The aureus was the gold unit equivalent to 25 denarii and 100 sesterces.

of one-quarter of an *aureus* but never issued them: and that he withdrew from circulation and melted down the larger pieces of two, three, four, ten, and one hundred *aurei* first issued by Elagabalus. This short account is however only partially borne out by the primary evidence. None of the higher pieces of Elagabalus survive and Lampridius may well be right in his account of their disappearance, provided that they were ever issued. The quarter *aureus* also only appears in the time of Valerian. But there can have been no large output of *semisses aureorum*, for though some struck by Alexander are extant, yet like the *aureus* they are as rare as under preceding Emperors[1]; while the *tremisses* of which Lampridius makes so great a point are unknown to us in this period and were apparently first struck by Valerian and Gallien.

The coins which provide secondary evidence are those[2] (now in the Cabinet de France) bearing the legends:—

I. IMP·SEV·ALEXANDER·AVG·RESTITVTOR·MONETAE·
II. IMP·SEV·ALEXANDER·AVG·RESTITVTA·MONETA·

Moneta is represented thereon standing with a mass of metal at her feet. These legends can have only one meaning:—that Alexander claimed to be a reformer in the matter of coinage. But the evidence is only secondary, since it merely represents a claim, which remains to be tested by actual examination of the coins themselves.

That examination confutes the account of Lampridius and the claim of Alexander. It shows that the latter made no serious effort to combat the system of depreciation. The *aureus* under him never attained to its old weight,

[1] Mommsen, *l.c.* p. 60.
[2] *v.* Cohen, IV. pp. 453–4.

and although it exceeds sometimes the decreased weight introduced by Caracalla, it more often falls below it. Electrum also appears as an alloy in Alexander's gold coins. Worse than this is the variety of weight which now first becomes marked. From the time of Alexander till that of Constantine so completely do different coins of the same denomination vary in weight and actual value that it is often impossible to fix the legal weight at any one period or the approximate limits of the different species[1]. This fluctuation, which strikingly contrasts with the minute accuracy of the weight of contemporary Persian coins, is, as Mommsen says, unparalleled.

It must be stated in justice to Alexander that the depreciation in his reign was far less than in succeeding periods. By 267 A.D. the *Argenteus Antoninianus* (a coin first struck by Caracalla and nominally of the value of $1\frac{1}{2}$ *denarii*) had come to contain but eight per cent. to a half per cent. of silver and to be in effect a copper coin coated with a silvery preparation which did not wear. The general deterioration is still more marked under Claudius and Aurelian, and was due to the dishonesty of Felicissimus, the superintendent of the Mint. But this fact will not exonerate Alexander. The history of the coinage from Nero onwards is one of increasing debasement, and if Alexander was not so guilty as Septimius, he did nothing to stem the tide, and he assisted considerably to increase the confusion by the issue of coins of varying weights. He brought nearer the time when audacious fraud together with official negligence and dishonesty should reduce the monetary system to a permanent national bankruptcy (for from the time of Gallien to that

[1] The natural ultimate result of such fluctuation would be payment by weight instead of by count, but there is no evidence to show that this method was adopted in commercial circles.

of Diocletian it was hardly less), and should at last from sheer necessity begin to call forth measures of strenuous reform[1]. In fact his policy was essentially wanting both in strength and foresight; it appears to be one more sign of that mediocrity which is characteristic of so much of his administrative work[2].

The collection of the Revenue was virtually in the hands of the Emperor through his *procuratores*[3]. Its expenditure was also virtually in his hands, for the distinction between the *aerarium* and the *fiscus* was by this time moribund. Into the *fiscus* passed the Revenue of the crown possessions and of the Emperor's private fortune; and the administration of these separate incomes, at first united under the *procurator fisci*, was divided by Septimius between *procuratores patrimonii* and *procuratores rationis privatae*[4]; he was probably unwilling that the large fortunes which he had inherited from the

[1] Vopisc. *Tacit.* XI. and *ib. Aurel.* XLVI. It may be added that the issue of copper remained much as before. It was still under the management of the Senate, as is shown by the letters SC on the copper coins and by inscriptions relating to Tresviri monetales of this period. (*v.* Orelli, 6503 and 6512.)

[2] It occurs to me as conceivable that the claim of Alexander to be "restitutor monetae" may have been justified in the following way. The evidence of extant coins shows that the only depreciation for which Caracalla was responsible was the reduction of the aureus. Dio however makes a wholesale charge against him of uttering debased coin (lib. LXXVII. c. 14), *τοῖς δὲ δὴ Ῥωμαίοις κίβδηλον καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον καὶ τὸ χρύσιον παρεῖχεν· τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ μολίβδου καταργυρούμενον τὸ δὲ καὶ ἐκ χαλκοῦ καταχρυσούμενον ἐσκευάζετο.* Provided that this statement be true and that Alexander recalled all these false coins, he could justly call himself "restitutor monetae." But the first proviso is doubtful, while the second is purely conjectural and probably will not carry conviction.

[3] The system of tax-farming by means of publicani had largely, but not entirely, disappeared. Many of the indirect taxes in particular were still collected by publicani. *v.* Arnold, *Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 198 (=p. 285, 2nd edition).

[4] Ceuleneer, *Vie de Septime Sévère*, p. 260.

Antonines and from Niger and Albinus should be confused with revenue essentially public. Meanwhile the *aerarium*, nominally managed by the Senate, had fallen into the hands of *praefecti aerarii Saturni*, ex-praetors appointed by the Emperor, and thus though disbursements from the *aerarium* needed the authority of a formal *Senatus consultum*, they were really controlled by the Imperial will. The distinction between the two treasuries had not indeed as yet been lost sight of; Dio refers to them as distinct[1]; Paullus speaks *de jure fisci et populi*[2], and Ulpian is in agreement with him[3]. But the division was soon to disappear, and under Justinian it has vanished[4]. Moreover it appears that in Alexander's reign the *aerarium militare* is first managed by an official[5] appointed by the Emperor[6]. This concentration of finance in a single irresponsible hand led inevitably to ill results, and the squandering of revenue was continually leaving to each succeeding reign an ever-increasing legacy of difficulties.

In Alexander's time however the budget probably provided small cause for anxiety. It is clear that the annual revenue which Rome required was borne without great hardship[7] by the taxpayers and that it was the exorbitant extravagance of reckless rulers,—immense public works, costly donatives, wanton personal expendi-

[1] Dio, LIII. 22.

[2] Paul. *Sent.* v. 12.

[3] Ulp. *Fr.* XXVIII. 7, XVII. 2.

[4] Just. *Instit.* II. 6. 14.

[5] Praefectus aerari militaris.

[6] Dio, LV. 25. *C. I. L.* VIII. 2392, 7049. Marquardt, *Organisation Financière*, p. 387 sqq.

[7] At one time the ordinary revenue was easily obtained, but in the third century the pressure of taxation begins to become marked. The provinces were no longer in the flourishing financial condition enjoyed two centuries earlier.

ture,—rather than the pressure of public necessity, that from time to time drained the Exchequer. Under Alexander there was nothing to swell the expenditure unduly. The army, in spite of the Persian War and the various lesser risings, can hardly have involved more than an average expenditure. The public works department was perhaps somewhat extravagant, but there was hardly an Emperor who failed to undertake some large and costly works. Religion involved no new expenditure. The socialistic measures which have been mentioned would cost but little, while donatives were given with no exceptional frequency, and the Emperor in his personal establishment was exceptionally thrifty.

During the reign of Commodus and again under Caracalla the revenue had been increased by the extension of the citizenship, which enlarged the revenue burdens of its recipients by bringing them within the scope of the death duties, the caduciary, and other laws, and providing merely honorary compensation[1]. One may therefore reasonably look for a remission of taxation from Alexander, taking into consideration the favourable circumstances in which he was placed, and Lampridius provides us with some information tending for the most part in that direction. On the one hand he says that Alexander extended the *aurum negotiatorium* to all trades[2]. On the other that he remitted that tax and the *aurum coronarium* at Rome[3], and that he reduced the *vectigalia* to one-thirtieth of their previous amount[4]. These

[1] Caracalla also increased the "Vicesima hereditatum" to ten per cent., but Macrinus reduced it again to its old level.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxiv. 5. *v.* Arnold, *Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 187.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxxii. 5.

[4] *Ib.* xxxix. 6.

statements will however require investigation. In the first place, the *aurum negotiatorium*, a tax on industry and commerce, was imposed on various trades,—and at first particularly on the disreputable ones[1],—by Imperial rescript, and it is improbable that Alexander should have made it general at a single step. Secondly, though the *aurum negotiatorium* may have existed at Rome, the *aurum coronarium* was confined to the provinces and Italy[2], and its remission at Rome therefore seems unintelligible[3]. The statement as to the reduction of the *vectigalia* is complicated by the fact that in Lampridius and writers of his date the word *vectigal* is used with very various meanings, implying at one time taxation in general, at another indirect taxation in particular. Probably however the *vectigalia* here referred to are the indirect taxes "attaching to an act or levied on things[4]," and include harbour dues and tolls, the *centesima rerum venalium* (one per cent. ad valorem duty on the value of goods sold in other than Roman markets), the *quinta et vicesima venalium mancipiorum*, the five per cent. duty on the price of freedmen, the two and a half per cent. customs duty on merchandise, and the tax known as the *vectigal ansarii et foricularii promercalium*. It is difficult to see how a reduction such as that mentioned by Lampridius could profitably have been effected. The *vectigalia* as they stood formed in all probability but a small part of the revenue; a tax of one-thirtieth per cent.

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* xxiv. 2. Lenones and meretrices had been taxed first by Caligula.

[2] Augustus was the first to receive aurum coronarium from Italy, but Italy is to be regarded as exclusive of Rome.

[3] Presumably the addition of the word Romae in the text of Lampridius is an error. Hadrian "aurum coronarium *Italiae* remisit, in *provinciis* minuit." (Spart. *Hadr.* vi. 5.)

[4] Cagnat, *Des Impôts Indirects chez les Romains*, p. vi.

ad valorem on sales could hardly cover the cost of collection[1]. I should be inclined to discredit the accuracy of the details recorded by Lampridius, and to take them as merely confirmatory of the general theory that some reductions of taxation, of a nature now indeterminable, were effected in Alexander's reign.

The prolixity of this discussion of Alexander's general administration will not suffice to cover the bareness of the theme. Inscriptions too often refer only to events of lesser importance, while the historians, on the few occasions on which they touch upon this subject, are usually contradictory or ill-informed. Yet the general impression left by the scattered evidence is that the administration was at least efficient and compares favourably with that of most preceding reigns. The care in the selection of officials, the acceptance of Senatorial supervision, the encouragement of industry, the comparative economy in finance, without doubt all combined to further the welfare of the Empire and to enhance the general satisfaction with the reigning house. The inscriptions in which states and individuals testify to their loyalty and prosperity, though less numerous than in some of the preceding reigns, are found in considerable numbers over the whole Empire, and they are couched in laudatory terms. In Rome for example an *antistes* erects an altar for the safety of Alexander and Mammaea and all the royal house[2], while there are two further inscriptions in honour of Mammaea[3] and five which may probably be referred

[1] Arnold (*Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 210) takes these vectigalia as meaning the provincial tribute (cf. Ammian. xvi. 5. 14). The view is perhaps correct; Lampridius is so loose in his terminology that it is impossible, in the absence of other evidence, to dogmatise on the subject.

[2] *C. I. L.* vi. 31372.

[3] *C. I. L.* vi. 31373 a, 31374.

to Alexander[1]. Elsewhere in Italy the inscriptions are not numerous. In Cisalpine Gaul Alexander is honoured by the township of Comum and by a further inscription erected probably by a private individual[2]. In South Italy the Colonia Flavia Puteoli built a temple of Serapis in Alexander's honour[3], and further inscriptions come from Panormus and the Colonia Tyndaritum[4]. A mutilated fragment from Tusculum also provides testimony of the same kind[5].

In Spain the Respublica Ucubitanorum (Espejo) erects an inscription in Alexander's honour[6], while in other parts of Baetica and in Tarraconensis similar inscriptions are found[7]. In Britain there is an inscription from Old Penrith in honour of Alexander and Mammaea[8]. In Africa there are several inscriptions. To the baths of Lambaesis which were erected in Alexander's honour[9] reference has already been made. The colony of Zarai in Numidia signalised its loyalty to Alexander and Mammaea[10]. Two altars were raised at Madaura "for the safety of the Emperor[11]." At the modern Schauwarch,

[1] *C. I. L.* VI. 1081, 1082, 31240, 31344, 31373.
[2] *C. I. L.* V. 2313, 5260.
[3] *C. I. L.* X. 1652–3.
[4] *C. I. L.* X. 7279, 7476.
[5] *C. I. L.* XIV. 2597.
[6] *C. I. L.* II. 1554.

imp CAES · M · AVRELIO ·
Severo ALEXANDRo · INVICT ·
aug PONTIF · MAX · TRIB · POT ·
cos PROCOS · P · P · OPTIMo ·
et feliciss PRINCIPI · N̄ · RESPUBLICA ·
ucubitanorVM · DEVOTA · NUMINI ·
maiestatique · eius

[7] *C. I. L.* II. 3328, 1533.
[8] *C. I. L.* VII. 319.
[9] *C. I. L.* VIII. 2714, 2658.
[10] *C. I. L.* VIII. 4511.
[11] *C. I. L.* VIII. 4673–4.

Thugga and Altentash, other similar inscriptions have been found[1].

But it is in the East especially that these monuments exist. Alexander, half Oriental, devoted to the East his chief attention, and the provinces to the east and north-east of Italy are continually recognising his solicitude. In Macedonia there are inscriptions at Berytus and Ancyra[2]. From Dalmatia come three more[3], from Pannonia Inferior another[4], and from Cappadocia two additional ones[5]. In Moesia Inferior a mutilated fragment from Troesmis represents a prayer to Diana for Alexander's safety, probably in connection with the establishment of an altar to the goddess in 223[6]. In the same province similar monuments were erected by Flavius Vitalis[7] and Domitianus Servus[8]. Dacia provides another altar consecrated in honour of Alexander and Mammaea[9], an inscription in Alexander's honour[10], and an important monument recording the *Victoria Severi Alexandri Aug.* and referring to the termination of the Persian War[11]. Greece provides a few similar testimonies[12]; Egypt and Palestine each one more[13].

Mammaea also is not without her inscriptions. In Rome her name is usually coupled with that of Alexander, but there are at least two inscriptions which may probably refer to her alone[14]. In Sicily the Colonia

[1] *C. I. L.* VIII. 1313, 1484, 1485. *C. I. G.* 3858.
[2] *C. I. L.* III. 166, 311, 316.
[3] *C. I. L.* III. 3121, 8359, 12683.
[4] *C. I. L.* III. 3710.
[5] *C. I. L.* III. 6784, 6901.
[6] *C. I. L.* III. 7497.
[7] *C. I. L.* III. 13723.
[8] *C. I. L.* III. 13722.
[9] *C. I. L.* III. 7955.
[10] *C. I. L.* III. 950.
[11] *C. I. L.* III. 5944.
[12] *C. I. G.* 1218, 1737, 2494.
[13] *C. I. G.* 4705, 4562.
[14] *C. I. L.* VI. 31374, MAT · AVG · MAT · SEN · M · PATR · and 31373 a.

Tyndaritum erected an inscription to her at the time at which it also honoured Alexander[1]. In Latium a fragment bears the words IVLIAE·MAMIAE·MATRIS·AVG·N[2]. From Bovinum comes another fragment[3]. In Spain Mammaea is honoured at Carthago Nova, at Acci, and at Valentia[4]. In Britain a mutilated fragment may reasonably be referred to her[5]. In the East there are more than twenty of her inscriptions, though on several her name has been purposely erased, probably at the command of some succeeding Emperor[6]. Orbiana has inscriptions at Puteoli and in Africa[7], and Maesa is also occasionally recognised[8].

This review by no means exhausts the catalogue of inscriptions set up by civilians singly or corporately in honour of the royal house during the reign[9], nor is the evidence of such inscriptions of very high value, inasmuch as the worst of the Emperors, such as Elagabalus, are the recipients of similar, though indeed less numerous, testimonies of good will. But they tend to confirm the other evidence which goes to show that, if Alexander failed in his higher political aims, he at least succeeded in securing efficiency in the general functions of the administration of the Empire.

[1] *C. I. L.* x. 7478. Cf. 7479, cited above.
[2] *C. I. L.* xiv. 3037.
[3] *C. I. L.* ix. 963.
[4] *C. I. L.* ii. 3413, 3393, 3733.
[5] *C. I. L.* vii. 222. MATER·$\overline{D}$·$\overline{N}$·ET·CASTRORVM·
[6] *C. I. L.* iii. 798, 3427, 3639, 7955, 7473, 8257, 10301, etc.
[7] *C. I. L.* x. 1654, viii. 9355.
[8] E.g. *C. I. L.* viii. 2564, 2715.
[9] The list is drawn solely from the *C. I. L.* and *C. I. G.* The *Eph. Epigraphica* and other works of reference provide several further inscriptions similar in tone: e.g. *Eph. Epigraphica* ii. 583, 596; v. 497, 570, 1229, 719. For the most part the laudatory inscriptions vary but little in their nature.

CHAPTER VI.

THE *DUX LIMITANEUS* AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS.

In the foregoing chapters an attempt has been made to determine something of the nature of Alexander's policy in dealing with those problems, great and small, with which the government was confronted. But in addition to measures of social and political importance, Alexander effected several changes, all save one of little ultimate significance, springing less from the dictates of policy than from the needs of the administrative machinery. Among such changes the first claim to consideration belongs to the innovation now generally attributed to this reign whereby the frontier soldiery began to be transformed into an hereditary class and the separation of civil and military power was commenced. That separation, in the form which it ultimately assumed, was certainly no part of the programme of Alexander. The period of tyranny which followed his death was still needed to instil into the hearts of the successive Emperors the dread of provincial governors, which led to the reduction of their power and the dismemberment of the dominions they once had swayed. Yet if, as it appears,

Alexander unwittingly laid the foundation of this new era in Roman provincial history, his innovation is worthy of the closest scrutiny.

It was Diocletian who consummated the reduction of the provincial governors, and what little he left undone was completed by Constantine. "Diocletian was not content with quartering the world. He further subdivided the provinces, making them much smaller and more numerous, and established a new official, the *Vicarius*, between the Caesars and the provincial governors. The whole Empire was divided into twelve dioceses, the smallest of which—Britain—consisted of four provinces, the largest—Oriens—of sixteen. Lactantius describes this sub-division thus. 'The provinces were also cut into fragments. Many governors and more officials settled upon each district, almost upon each city[1].' The 101 provinces thus formed were under different governors of different rank. There was a proconsul in Africa, Zeugitana, and probably in Asia, Achaea and Baetica. Then came the *consulares* with rank of *clarissimi*. Then the *correctores*, some of whom had the rank of *clarissimi*, others only of *perfectissimi*. Lastly the *praesides* with the rank of *perfectissimi*. This title of *praeses* supplanted the old title of *procurator*. The title of legate, if it had not ceased already, does not at all events occur after this reign[2]." Provincial governors thus restricted in their competence were necessarily, and intentionally, incapable of the military commands which under the system of Augustus they had enjoyed. Under Diocletian the separation of civil and military office is complete, and under Constantine the new

[1] Lact. *de M. P.* VII.

[2] Arnold, *Rom. Prov. Administration*, pp. 170 sq. (=pp. 187 sq. 2nd edition).

organisation of the army is found in full activity. Two *magistri militum*, whose number was subsequently increased, exercised supreme military jurisdiction, and under them thirty-five commanders, *duces* or *comites*, led the soldiers in the various districts of the Empire. At the same time the army was divided into two classes, the *palatini*[1] and *comitatenses*[2] on the one hand, the *limitanei* and *ripenses* on the other; the former the favoured guards, the latter the ill-paid and less honoured frontier troops who bore almost alone the brunt of the barbarian invasions, and who, domiciled in their military cantonments, were equally charged with the cultivation of the frontier provinces.

In the old view[3], these great changes were the work of Diocletian and Constantine alone, and this opinion is not without support in ancient authorities; Zosimus, whose compilations are frequently reliable, speaks of Constantine as domiciling the soldiers in agricultural districts and calling them out on active service only in time of war, though in his account the agricultural holdings were not confined to the borders of the Empire[4]. But it is intrinsically improbable that the new provincial

[1] Created by Domitian to replace the praetorians.

[2] Troops of the Emperor's suite.

[3] E.g. that of Gibbon.

[4] Zos. II. 3. 4. *ἔπραξε δέ τι Κωνσταντῖνος καὶ ἕτερον ὃ τοῖς βαρβάροις ἀκώλυτον ἐποίησε τὴν ἐπὶ τὴν Ῥωμαίοις ὑποκειμένην χώραν διάβασιν, τῆς γὰρ Ῥωμαίων ἐπικρατείας ἁπανταχοῦ τῶν ἐσχατιῶν τῇ Διοκλητιανοῦ προνοίᾳ..... πόλεσι καὶ φρουρίοις καὶ πύργοις διειλημμένης, καὶ πάντος τοῦ στρατιωτικοῦ κατὰ ταῦτα τὴν οἴκησιν ἔχοντος, ἄπορος τοῖς βαρβάροις ἦν ἡ διάβασις.....καὶ ταύτην τὴν ἀσφάλειαν διαφθείρων ὁ Κωνσταντινὸς τῶν στρατιωτῶν τὸ πολὺ μέρος τῶν ἐσχατιῶν ἀποστήσας ταῖς οὐ δεομέναις βοηθείας πόλεσιν ἐγκατέστησε, καὶ τοὺς ἐνοχλουμένους ὑπὸ βαρβάρων ἐγύμνωσε βοηθείας.*

From Ammianus Marcellinus also it appears that when a war broke out the troops went to the frontier, and when it was finished they returned to the provinces.

arrangement of Diocletian and Constantine,—involving four important innovations, the separation of civil and military power, the establishment of military commanders of novel competence, the creation of a territorial and hereditary soldiery, and the subdivision of the old provincial units,—could have been suddenly and spontaneously evolved and set in motion in the course of merely a few years. Accordingly more modern scholarship has sought signs of the coming innovation in earlier reigns. Mr W. T. Arnold dates the separation of military and civil power back to the reign of Aurelian. "The many short-lived Emperors after Caracalla spent their reigns contending against the barbarians; and it is only seldom possible to ascribe to this or that Emperor some definite administrative change. It appears however that the separation of civil and military functions, which is commonly ascribed to Diocletian, must have been the work of some earlier Emperor. An inscription of the time of Carinus (circa A.D. 281) proves that the governor of Numidia at that time did not call himself legate, but simply by the civil title of *praeses*, and was not of higher than equestrian rank. Another inscription of the year A.D. 261 testifies to the existence at that date of a legate of Numidia. So in the twenty years between 261 A.D. and 281 A.D. the change must have occurred. Now it would be absurd to ascribe any such change to the indolent and incompetent Gallienus, who let Gaul sever itself from the Empire because he would not take the trouble to protect it; and if we glance through the list of other transitory rulers of the period, there is but one man who conceivably might have done it. That man is Aurelian, the same who established the new office of *corrector* in Italy; and it is very probable that we are to ascribe to him these new *praesides*, and also the creation of the new office

of the *dux limitis Africae*, a military commander who about this period appears in Africa by the side of the *praeses*. Putting the facts together it comes out plainly that the governor no longer was allowed to hold civil and military powers in his single hand, but that with lesser dignity and inferior rank he was assigned the jurisdiction and other civil duties, while a new officer took command of the troops[1]."

It is probable that, as contended, the *praeses* of 281 differed from the provincial governors of earlier days. He is described as *vir perfectissimus praeses provinciae Numidiae*, and as Mr Arnold truly states in a note the epithet *perfectissimus* is a certain sign of equestrian rank. But Mr Arnold is not justified in supposing that the title *praeses* proves that the governor was not a *legatus*. On the contrary Numidia was made an Imperial province by Septimius, and he placed it in the hands of a *Legatus Augusti propraetore* who from the first assumed the additional title of *praeses provinciae Numidiae*. Sextus Varius Marcellus, the husband of Soaemias, is himself known to us as such a *praeses*[2]. Apart from this there are clearly several flaws in Mr Arnold's argument. The diminution of power apparently existing in Numidia need not have been common to the whole Empire in 281, nor does the existence of a *legatus* of Numidia in 261 afford proof that all the provinces were then governed as before by Senatorial *legati*. Nor yet again is the appearance of a *praeses* of Africa remarkable, considering that his neighbour of Numidia held that title. Nor does the appearance of a *Dux Limitis Africae* in Aurelian's reign preclude the existence of that or other similar officials at an earlier date. The essential facts which

[1] Arnold, *Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 156 (=pp. 171–2 2nd edition).

[2] *C. I. G.* 6627. Ceuleneer, *Vie de Septime Sévère*, p. 247.

Mr Arnold adduces seem to resolve themselves into two; in the time of Aurelian there was a *Dux Limitis Africae*, a military official apparently alien to the early Empire; and in 281 the *praeses* of Numidia was of equestrian rank; and the latter point is somewhat discounted by the fact that the office of the *praeses Numidiae* was an exceptional one and that it is not clear that it was previously held in all cases by a Senator[1]. Nevertheless it need not be contested that there are sufficient indications that under Aurelian the separation of civil and military power had made some progress. There is indeed inscriptional confirmation of this fact which Mr Arnold does not mention. Mr Arnold's argument in no way proves however that the separation had not begun at an earlier date, and any indications of such a fact need consideration.

Of these indications there are more than one. Lampridius definitely ascribes to Alexander the inception of the policy which has been presumed to be Aurelian's. "Alexander gave land captured from the enemy to the frontier generals and soldiers ('limitaneis ducibus et militibus') on condition that it should be theirs only if their heirs became soldiers, and that it should never come into the possession of civilians; his opinion was that his soldiers would fight the more strenuously if they were defending what was actually their own land. He gave them also live stock and slaves to enable them to cultivate the land, lest for want of servants or through the old age of the occupiers the lands adjoining the barbarian territory should become deserted[2]." "Alexander made many *provinciae legatoriae* into *provinciae praesi-*

[1] Sextus Varius Marcellus, it seems, is not an example to the contrary. He had received the Senatorial dignity before holding office in Numidia.

[2] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVIII. 4.

diales[1]." Whatever may be the value of the last assertion, its meaning seems clear enough. Lampridius can only intend to convey that many provinces previously governed by a *legatus* were now governed by a *praeses*, and writing in the time of Constantine he must have used the adjective *praesidialis* in a sense at least closely approximating to the sense then current. In the former passage, in addition to referring to a definite system of heritable agricultural holdings for soldiers, he mentions the existence of the *dux limitaneus*,—the frontier general. The phrase used incidentally may of course be anachronistic, but if the general assertion of Lampridius as to the agricultural cantonments can be supported, it would be only reasonable to expect that frontier generals with an enlarged competency arose in the same reign. It has been held[2] that the introduction of the *dux* was the work of Septimius, but the supposition is probably erroneous; on the other hand modern scholars have been content to accept the authority of Lampridius for the reign of Alexander[3]. Unfortunately on this question inscriptions give us no material assistance; a *dux* is mentioned from time to time in literature[4], but in inscriptions the *Dux Limitis Africae* stands almost alone in the years prior to 280.

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXIV. 1. With this passage we must take C. XXII. 6. Praesides provinciarum quos vere non factionibus laudari comperit et itineribus secum semper in vehiculo habuit et muneribus adiuvit. In XXIV. 1, a distinction is clearly drawn between provinciae legatoriae and provinciae praesidiales, and it is fair to suppose that a similar distinction is here existent between praeses and legatus, although in ordinary circumstances praeses is from time to time used as the equivalent of legatus.

[2] Duruy, *Hist. of Rome and Roman People*, VI. 293.

[3] Marquardt, *Administration Rom.* II. 585; Borghesi, *Œuvres*, III. 277, V. 397, 405.

[4] *v.* authorities cited at Marquardt *l.c.*, Treb. Poll. *Claud.* XV., Vopisc. *Aur.* XIII.

In later times the *dux limitaneus* appears with great frequency[1]. The *duces* of course grew in number and importance in the course of time, and on this account references to them become increasingly numerous.

On the wider question however of the military agricultural cantonments, of which Lampridius speaks so explicitly, there is some distinct confirmatory evidence. One of the *constitutiones veteranorum*[2], which is considerably mutilated and imperfectly dated, but which can be shown with much plausibility to date in or soon after Alexander's reign, contains a remarkable and unusual clause. It grants in the regular terms the citizenship to certain centurions and decurions, together with *conubium* with their wives at the time of the grant or with their future wives if they were then single; it further grants the same privileges "to the sons of such of them as with the sons born to them in their province were *milites castellani*." The expression *milites castellani* is due in part to a restoration[3], but there can be little doubt of its correctness. The phrase designates the frontier agricultural soldiery, —the *limitanei* or *limitotrophi* whom Alexander is said to have created[4]. In date the inscription, there is little doubt, was not later than 247, while for orthographical reasons, apart from others, it cannot be earlier than 216. Viewing this inscription in the light of the passage from Lampridius, one is led to the conclusion that these *milites castellani* are the products of Alexander's innovation.

[1] E.g. in the East we have among others,—*C. I. L.* III. 764 (Diocletian), 5565 (310 A.D.), 7494 (365 A.D.), 3761 (377 A.D.), 4656, 8275, 2486, 10677, etc. Cf. *Eph. Epigr.* v. 223, 541.

[2] *C. I. L.* III. p. 2001, No. XC.

[3] Cf. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 290.

[4] *v.* the note in *C. I. L. l.c.*, cf. esp. *Cod. Just.* II. .60 "De fundis limitotrophis et terris et paludibus et pascuis limitaneis vel castellorum."

Other inscriptions, definitely originating in Alexander's reign, have been regarded as containing further confirmatory evidence. Two inscriptions in particular relate to a certain *territorium* of the Seventh Legion, situated in Pannonia Inferior, adjoining the colony of Viminacium[1].

The mention at this date for the first time[2] of a *territorium legionis* looks at first sight like a direct confirmation of Lampridius, and it is further remarkable that henceforward mentions of *prata legionis* and of *milites pecuarii* become common[3]. It must however be remembered that the system of granting land to settlers on condition of their serving in the legions was not new. Marcus Aurelius had in all probability made such grants[4], and the innovation of Alexander was rather that of making the tenure hereditary only on condition of continued service on the part of the heirs. Moreover among many references to *pecuarii milites*[5], there is at least one

[1] The inscriptions are *Eph. Epigr.* II. 696, and *C. I. L.* III. 8112. The first runs as follows :—

IMP · CAESAR ·
M · AVR · SEVERUS ·
alexander p f avg
BALNEVM · A · SOLO ·
TERRITORIO · LEG ·
II · AD · P · F · S · FECIT ·
CVRANTE · FL ·
MARCIANO · COS.

The second refers to "Myrismus Felicis Dispensatoris Vikarius lustrator iussu Claudii Alexandri hastati cum mensoribus."

[2] Mommsen, *Eph. Epigr. l.c.*

[3] *v.* Schiller, *Ges. d. Rom. Kaiserzeit*, I. 773. Milites pecuarii have clearly some connection with the prata legionis. *v.* Mommsen's note at *C. I. L.* II. 2916.

[4] Schiller, *l.c.* pp. 893–4. Cf. *C. I. L.* V. 893, VIII. 10570.

[5] E.g. *C. I. L.* VIII. 2791, 2827, 2553, 2568 (2), 2569 (28).

dated prior to Alexander[1], while one of the mentions of the *prata legionis* may reasonably be referred to the early Imperial period[2]. The nature of the *territorium legionis* and the conditions on which it was held are obscure, and the chronology of the inscriptions forbids our attributing it to the work of Alexander.

The evidence of inscriptions confirmatory of Lampridius is therefore incomplete; the *constitutio* first referred to provides probably the best witness. But on the other hand the facts recorded by inscriptions do not conflict with the express statements of the historian, which there is no adequate reason to disbelieve. These statements do not however go very far. Marquardt indeed, accepting the evidence for Alexander's innovations, regards his reign as marking the last of three decisive epochs in the development of the military organisation[3]. The introduction of the phalanx by Hadrian was the first decisive event; the drafting of the praetorians from the legions by Septimius was the second; the separation of military and civil power by Alexander was, in his view, the third. But this would seem to be an over-statement of the facts. The first two innovations were designed by men of high capacity and were instantly carried out; the introduction of the phalanx, the new system of recruiting the praetorians, were the work of a moment. But the establishment of an hereditary landed soldiery, with military leaders separate from the provincial governors, was really the work of Diocletian; Alexander's part in that work was not to effect the revolution, but to begin, perhaps with no prevision of the result, some

[1] *C. I. L.* VIII. 2553 under Septimius.

[2] *C. I. L.* II. 2916 (Terminus Augustalis dividit pratum legionis IV et agrum Iuliobrigensem), and the Editor's note there.

[3] Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, pp. 360 sqq.

tentative measures which only after many years were carried to their logical fulfilment. In the reign of Alexander himself, the effect of the system of agricultural holdings cannot have been great, probably it was almost inappreciable, for otherwise it would have appeared more fully in inscriptions and have attracted the notice of historians. Alexander's work in this direction was to commence, with a view to a more efficient working of the military machinery, a system which later formed the groundwork for the introduction of a new era into the history of the Roman Empire.

Apart from the obscure question of Alexander's part in the establishment of the frontier military cantonments, modern research, painfully groping through the darkness of the intervening centuries, is able to distinguish but little of the general details of army organisation in his time. It has been thought[1] that the account of Hyginus was written shortly prior to Alexander's reign and embodies a faithful account of the army in that period; but inscriptions of Alexander's time are in conflict with the account of Hyginus, which more probably was written between the reigns of Philip and Gallien[2]. It is clear however that Alexander made no alterations of importance in the general organisation. His corps of *argyraspides* and *chrysaspides*[3] in the Persian War is of no novel significance; his formation in that war was still the phalanx which Hadrian had introduced[4]. The change whereby the old *praefecti castrorum* took the name of *praefecti legionis* was antecedent to Alexander by some

[1] By Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, pp. 352 sqq.

[2] In particular Hyginus refers to the legion as having no cavalry. But there are references to such cavalry under Alexander: *C. I. Rh.* 1034 (yr 231) and in 240 (*C. I. L.* III. 5942) as well as under Caracalla (*C. I. L.* VIII. 3821).

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* L. 5. [4] *Ib.*

years[1]. It was however probably in his reign that the separate company of *fabri* under a *praefectus fabrum* was abolished. Probably they were distributed among the various cohorts of the legions; certainly they were not entirely dispensed with[2].

Among institutions organised by the soldiers themselves, there is in Alexander's reign an inscriptional reference to a *scola* of scouts attached to the *legiones I. et II. adiutrices*[3], showing the continuance of the system of lesser co-operative societies established in the army since the time of Septimius. The *scola*, distinct from the Savings Bank and Burial Fund of each cohort, was a voluntarily formed *collegium* in the nature of a mutual

[1] Ceuleneer, *Vie de Septime Sévère*, p. 261.

[2] They disappear as a company after Septimius. Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, p. 251.

[3] *C. I. L.* III. 3524. Pannonia Inferior, Aquincum, year 228; the body of the inscription, which is followed by a list of names, is as follows :—

SCOLA · SPECVLATORVM ·
LEGIONVM · I · ET · II · ADIVTRICIVM ·
PIARVM · FIDELIVM · SEVERIANAR ·
REFECTA · PER · EOSDEM · QVORVM ·
NOMINA · INFRA · SCRIPTA · SVNT · DEDI
CANTE · FL · AELIANO · LEG · AVG · PR · PR · KAL
OCT · MODESTO · ET · PROBO · COS ·

Cf. *Eph. Ep.* IV. 503, erected in 229 by a Scola tubicinum,—

MINERVAE ·
AVG · SACR ·
SCOLA · TV
BICINVM ·
EX · VOT · POS ·
IMP · D · N · ALEXAN
DRO · III · ET · DIONE · COS

In these two inscriptions the word scola means the institution itself; elsewhere until the third century the word applies rather to the Club premises. *Eph. Ep.* IV. 503 note.

aid society. The members of one of the earliest known *scolae*[1] each made a contribution (*scamnarium*) of 750 *denarii* in return for certain privileges. The societies possessed a common meeting-place[2]; but so far as can be traced they were confined at this time chiefly, if not entirely, to the eastern districts of the Empire[3].

The recruiting of the legions was a function which, in common with most military matters, had been taken over by the Emperors, but in Italy the Senate sometimes interfered[4]; this Senatorial privilege seems to have been exercised at least once in Alexander's reign[5]. Neither the status of the legionary nor the number of the legions underwent any important modification at the hands of Alexander. One of the chief questions of status centred round the matrimonial laws. A married man on joining the colours was required to separate from his wife[6], and a soldier once enlisted could not, strictly speaking, marry before his discharge[7], or until the expiration of the required service of 25 years[8]. But certain relaxations of this law were permitted. After Septimius the soldier was allowed a *concubina*[9], and the Emperors occasionally granted the rights of *civitas* and *conubium* as a reward for exceptional service. Two such grants are found

[1] A Scola cornicinum of the Leg. III. Aug. under Septimius. *C. I. L.* VIII. 2557.

[2] As in *Eph. Ep.* IV. 503, cited above.

[3] The inscriptions come thence, *C. I. L.* III. 3524; VIII. 2554, 2557; *Eph. Ep.* IV. 503. Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, pp. 309 sqq.

[4] Cf. *C. I. L.* VI. 3836, VIII. 7036.

[5] *C. I. L.* X. 3856. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, V. 123.

[6] *Digest*, XXIV. 1, XXXII. 8, and LX. 2.

[7] Cf. Dio, LX. 24. Tac. *Ann.* XIV. 27.

[8] The change of the minimum from 21 to 25 years was antecedent to Alexander.

[9] Herodian, III. 8. 5.

under the hand of Alexander[1]. As for the number of the legions, this remained fixed at thirty from the time of Vespasian until Septimius, though their names were not infrequently changed[2]. Septimius added three more, and this number Alexander did not disturb[3].

References to the troops in Italy are not numerous at this time. The second Parthian Legion which Septimius stationed at Alba has left several inscriptions[4], but none of them are dated for Alexander's reign. The praetorians have left, among others of less importance[5], an inscription of the year 227[6], showing that the system of recruiting

[1] *C. I. L.* III. p. 893, No. LI. and p. 1999, No. LXXXVI. *v.* Mommsen at *C. I. L.* III. pp. 905 sqq. and Marquardt, *Organisation Militaire*, p. 306. The conubium was granted in respect of a wife existing at the date of the grant, or in the case of single men in respect of a wife subsequently married. The Constitutio No. XC. above referred to is also possibly from Alexander's hand.

[2] The practice under which the legions took, in addition to their fixed names, the name of the reigning Emperor, became general after Caracalla.

[3] Marquardt, *l.c.* p. 172. *C. I. L.* VI. 3492 A and B compared with Dio, LV. 23–4, gives a catalogue of the several legions. The positions of the legions is a difficult subject which can only be satisfactorily settled by the inscriptions. The positions at the end of the reign of Septimius are given by Ceuleneer, *Vie de Septime Sévère*, pp. 36 sqq. and 262 sqq.: but the stations were not permanent; legions were from time to time transplanted to meet particular military needs. The Persian and German Wars of Alexander involved the march of western legions to the opposite ends of the Empire.

[4] *C. I. L.* VI. 3367 sqq.

[5] Cf. *C. I. L.* VI. 2831–3.

[6] *C. I. L.* VI. 2799:

IN · HONORE · DOMVS · DIVINAE ·
ASCLEPIO · ZIMIDRENO · CIVES ·
PHILIPPOPOLITANORVM · QVORVM · NOMI
NA · INFRA · SCRIPTA · SVNT ·
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
¦DEDC · VI · KAL · IVL ·
ALBINO · ET · MAXIMO · COS.

Cf. *C. I. L.* VI. p. 720 sqq.

from the provinces was in full swing. Members of the cohorts of the *vigiles* are represented by several personal inscriptions relating to the performance of their daily duties. These records, left in one of the guard-houses, possess some personal interest, but they are chiefly important as attesting a change which had occurred in the composition of the body. Until the time of Septimius the *vigiles* had been composed of freedmen; Septimius and his successors chiefly enlisted citizens of free birth[1]. The inscriptions of the *vigiles* under Alexander for the most part bear freemen's names[2].

The system of administration, executive and judicial alike, was by now to a large extent stereotyped, and was likely to undergo little alteration. One old-established portion of the judiciary however was passing away, if indeed it had not already lapsed,—the system of trial by a panel of jurymen. The collective *iudices*, as opposed to the individual *iudex* appointed by the legal officers to hear the proceedings *in iudicio* under the formulary system, had already become an important part of the administrative machinery at the close of the Republic,

[1] Ceuleneer, *Septime Sévère*, p. 262.

[2] *C. I. L.* VI. 2999 (Metius Valentinus), 3001 (Julius Saturninus), 3005 (Octavius Felix), 3008 (Aurelius Plutarchus Herculanius), 3015, 3019, 3029 (Maenius Restutus), 3051, 3056 (Julius Maximus). These inscriptions are all in similar terms: the first mentioned is as follows,—

	IMP · //////// ALEXAND	
	RO · CAESARE · AVCC · GRATO · ET · Sel	
	EVCO · COS · METIVS · VALENT	
VOTI	INVS · MIL · COH · VI · VIG · ANTONINIa	VOT XX
X	VES / TIBERINI · SEBACIARIA ·	
	FECIT · M · IVLIO · V X	
	CL	

As to Sebacia or Sebaciaria (a night duty, imposed for a month at a time on a member of the vigiles) *v. C. I. L.* VI. p. 748 and *Annal. Inst. Arch.* 1874, pp. 120–4.

but the Imperial *cognitio extra ordinem* grew so extensively under the Empire that by the beginning of the second century it had usurped practically all the functions of the *iudices*. The date at which the latter lapsed is obscure; the reign of Marcus Aurelius is the latest in which their names appear with any frequency[1], but there is one inscription referring to a *iudex* who can scarcely have held his office much earlier than Alexander[2].

Among alterations of practice we may note the extended functions of the *pontifices* and augurs[3], and the payment of assessors[4], the latter an important innovation, for the advisory functions of the assessors were far-reaching, and their establishment as permanent salaried officials could only tend to greater efficiency. On the other hand the lesser Roman magistracies comprised under the head of the Vigintivirate continued as before. Caesonius Lucillus Macer Rufinianus, a *XXvir reip. curandae* in 238, was *Xvir stlitibus iudicandis* under Alexander[5]. Aurelius Quintianus, to whom an inscription was erected in 235, was *IIIvir monetalis*[6] and Dexter, consul in 225, had held the same office[7]. Petronius Melior, a *Sodalis Augustalis* in 230, had commenced his official career as *Xvir*[8], and Maximus, the consul of 232, had held the position of *IIIvir capitalis*[9].

[1] *C. I. L.* II. 1180, III. 4495, VIII. 6711. *C. I. L.* XI. 1926, set up in 205 to an old man who had been a iudex. He may well have held the office in this reign.

[2] *C. I. L.* XI. 1836: the ex-judex was consul in 261. *v.* Mommsen, *Droit Public*, VI. ii. p. 144.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XXII. 5. [4] *Ib.* XLVI. 1.

[5] *C. I. L.* XIV. 3902.

[6] *C. I. L.* X. 3850. [7] *C. I. L.* VI. 1368.

[8] *C. I. L.* XI. 3367.

[9] *C. I. L.* VI. 1532. The remaining office of the Vigintivirate, the IVviri viis in urbe purgandis, also continued, though it is not apparently mentioned in inscriptions of the reign.

The chief offices of the civil service had in the early Empire been entrusted to freedmen who had in turn forfeited all claim to honesty in their administration. Their scandalous government led Hadrian to transfer their positions to the equites[1], and from his time they were held by an hereditary class drawn from the equestrian order, carrying on the traditions of those who once had undertaken the collection of the revenue. Alexander was far from reverting to the earlier system; if he was lenient towards freedmen as a class (he imposed a penalty on a *patronus* who neglected to perform his statutory duties of protection)[2], on the other hand he denied to freedmen the right of advancement to equestrian rank on the ground that the latter was the "Seminarium" of the Senate[3]. Alexander purged the order[4], in which Elagabalus had doubtless installed, as in the case of the Senate, members unworthy of the dignity, and the equites thus purified were left at the head of the civil service. There is indeed an undated inscription[5], in which a *praetorianus* is found as an Imperial Secretary of State; this divergence from the usual practice would be less remarkable in the reign of Alexander who, almost alone among the Emperors, allowed the Senate to interfere in Imperial affairs, and chronology does not preclude the supposition that this official was appointed by him; but such unsupplemented and doubtful evidence does not warrant the assumption that Alexander made any per-

[1] Spart. *Hadr.* XXII. "Ab epistulis et a libellis primus equites Romanos habuit." Vitellius had done the same thing previously. Tac. *Hist.* I. 58. 1.

[2] *Digest*, XXXVII. 14. 5, XXXI. 87. 3. The dependence of the freedmen on the patronus was broken.

[3] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XIX. 4.

[4] *Ib.* XV. 1.

[5] *C. I. L.* VI. 3836.

manent modification of the system which he found in vogue. Lampridius, in speaking of the equites, ascribes to Alexander the provision that they should be distinguished from Senators by the width of the *clavus*[1]. But the distinction between the *laticlavia* and the *angusticlavia* was older by centuries than the age of Alexander, and at most it can only be supposed that he issued an injunction confirmatory of the old practice; more probably the passage in the Augustan Histories is a pure mistake.

Septimius, and in a less degree Caracalla, had introduced many improvements into the administration of the provinces. They had considered their material welfare by the maintenance of bridges and roads, the great channels of industry and commerce; and this practice, as we have seen, Alexander was not slow to follow. Caracalla had moreover flung broadcast the doubtful honour of the Roman citizenship on provincials who had not previously enjoyed it. Septimius, while refraining from any measure of such far-reaching consequences, was exceptionally active in effecting changes in the administrative system. In almost every case it was the East that profited; the Western provinces, and especially Gaul, received the most meagre attention from an Emperor whose associations and affections alike were African or Oriental. With a view partly to better administration, partly no doubt to a curtailment of the power and resources of the provincial governors, he divided Britain and Moesia each into two separate departments, and made Numidia a province distinct from Africa. He established a procurator in Osrhoene and transferred Bithynia to the Senate. Twelve eastern cities received

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* XVII. Ut equites Romani a Senatoribus clavi qualitate discernerentur. Mommsen, *Droit Public*, VI. ii. p. 115.

the *Ius Italicum*, three the *Ius Municipii*. Neither does this complete the list of his administrative innovations[1].

Alexander's work in such directions was more restricted. Like Septimius, he gave his chief attention to the East, and scarcely a single change of importance is to be found in the western provinces. It is partly as a result of this fact that the changes introduced were changes rather of administrative machinery than of constitutional theory. "In the western provinces a principle of Romanisation was continually going on; in the East on the other hand, especially within reach of Hellenic influences, the old system of government was rightly left untouched; so little was the constitution of the subject states altered under Roman rule, that in the inscriptions of the eastern cities signs of that rule would scarcely be perceptible but for the occasional references to the ἱεραὶ ἐπιγραφαί, the 'sacred rescripts' of the Emperor, which alone smack of the atmosphere of Roman dominion[2]." There was indeed but little incentive to effect any radical change. Like Macrinus and Elagabalus, Alexander found the provincial administration sufficiently effective, and he was too little in the provinces to understand much of their actual needs. Consequently inscriptions of his reign testify for the most part to the continuance of the old conditions. For example, Lusitania, governed under Tiberius by a *Legatus Augusti*, is still under an official of the same title in Alexander's reign[3]. Gallia Narbonensis is ruled under Alexander by a propraetor with the title of proconsul,

[1] Ceuleneer, *Vie de Septime Sévère*, pp. 244 sqq. The division of Moesia seems to have been the act of Severus, not of Hadrian.

[2] Arnold, *Rom. Prov. Administration*, p. 22.

[3] *C. I. L.* x. 5182, xiv. 3900.

exactly as it was before and during the reign of Septimius[1]. The division of Moesia into two provinces is unaltered[2]. Thrace still has its procurator, as under Marcus Aurelius[3]. Mauretania Tingitana and Mauretania Caesariensis keep at least till the reign of Gordian their *procuratores pro legato*[4],—officials so named to distinguish them from the lesser procuratores, such as a certain Aelianus who was *procurator rationis privatae provinciae Mauretaniae Caesariensis* under Alexander[5].

The general conferment of the Roman citizenship by Caracalla had largely taken the point out of grants of *Ius Coloniae*, *Ius Municipii*, etc., which earlier Emperors had frequently found it convenient to make. It appears however that it was in Alexander's reign that the *Ius Coloniae* was conferred on Chakka in Syria[6]. Damascus also became a colony presumably at this date, for it is now that coins of the city first bear the legend COL· ΔAMAC·MET[7]. Bostra,—the seat of the *Legio III. Cyrenaica* from the time of Marcus Aurelius to the beginning of the fifth century[8],—was also made a colony by Alexander[9]. It has indeed been held, on the authority of a late writer, that the grant was made by Septimius[10], but the colonial money dates only from

[1] *C. I. L.* VI. 1408, Borghesi, *Œuvres*, IV. 133.

[2] *C. I. L.* III. 773, Borghesi, *Œuvres*, II. 227 sq.

[3] *C. I. L.* II. 6121, *Bulletin de Corresp. Hell.* 1882, p. 183.

[4] Rufinius was procurator of Mauretania Caesariensis under Gordian. *C. I. L.* VIII. 9963. Furius Celsus was procurator under Alexander. Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVIII. 1.

[5] *C. I. L.* III. 1456. Many similar instances of the continuance of the old organisation might be adduced; *v.* Marquardt's review of the provinces in *L'Administration Romaine*, vol. II.

[6] *Rev. Arch.* XI. 265, Ceuleneer, *l.c.* 248.

[7] Mionnet, v. 292, No. 61.

[8] Waddington, 1927, 1933 etc., Dio, LV. 23.

[9] Marquardt, *l.c.* II. 387.

[10] The view is held by Eckhel (III. 500), Zumpt (*Comment. Epigraph.* I. 431), Ceuleneer, *l.c.* 248, relying on Damasc. in *Phot. Bibl.* p. 347, ed.

Alexander, from whom the city derives the further name Alexandriana[1]. Damascus also became Metropolis[2], while Caesarea received the title of *Metropolis provinciae Syriae Palestinae*[3]. Nisibis, the city besieged by Ardeshir at the commencement of the Persian War, also received the title under Alexander[4], if it had not indeed received it from Septimius[5]. Emesa had obtained the honour under Elagabalus[6].

The government of Mesopotamia at this time is very obscure. Captured by Trajan, abandoned by Hadrian, retaken by Lucius Verus, and finally organised as a province by Septimius[7], the country was probably liable at this period to frequent modifications of government. The governor of Mesopotamia is variously described as *praefectus Mesopotamiae*[8], ἔπαρχος[9], ὕπαρχος[10], and ἡγεμών[11]. Moreover there were disturbances. Caracalla in 215 expelled from Osrhoene the reigning prince Augaros[12], but another Augaros reigned there in the time of Gordian III.[13]; a restoration clearly took place in the interval, but the events which led to it are unknown to us. There was further the great upheaval of the Persian War.

Bekker, ἀπεδήμησεν εἰς τὰ Βόστρα τῆς Ἀραβίας πόλιν μὲν οὐκ ἀρχαίαν (ὑπὸ γὰρ Σεβήρου τοῦ βασιλέως πολίζεται).

[1] Certain coins of Elagabalus and Caracalla assigned to Bostra belong elsewhere. Marquardt, *l.c.*

[2] *v.* the coins above cited.

[3] Eckhel, III. 432.

[4] So Eckhel, III. 517.

[5] So Ceuleneer, *l.c.* p. 248, relying on Dio, LXXV. 3, ἀξίωμα τῇ Νισίβει δούς, and Henzen, 5501.

[6] Eckhel, III. 311. Sidon was also made Metropolis by Elagabalus, Eckhel, III. 388.

[7] Dio, LXXV. 1–2 and 9. Septimius established in Mesopotamia the Leg. I. and III. Parth. *v.* also Mommsen, *Rom. Prov.* II. 36 and Dio, LV. 24.

[8] *C. I. L.* VI. 1638.

[9] *C. I. G.* 4602.

[10] Zos. I. 60.

[11] In 229, Herod. VI. 2. 1.

[12] Dio, LXXVII. 12.

[13] Eckhel, III. 516.

Several colonies were founded at various times to defend the frontiers. Amongst others Carrhae, on the Khabûr, was established as a colony by Marcus Aurelius, and it would seem that Alexander honoured that city in some way, for in his reign and afterwards its coins add the title ALEXANDRINA to the usual legend COL·MET·ANTONIANA·AVR[1].

The nature of the government of Numidia and the appearance of Sextus Varius Marcellus as *Legatus Augusti propraetore*[2] with the additional title of *praeses* has already been mentioned. P. Julius Junianus Martialianus held the same office under Alexander[3]. We may further note the concession, for which Ulpian is responsible, by which a verbal undertaking was regarded as obligatory even if made in the Punic language[4]: the Libyans and Phoenicians who formed the majority of the population of Africa would find the concession useful in their ordinary business, and it must be remembered that the time had passed in which it was required that verbal contracts, in order to be valid, should be made in set Latin formulae.

Of more importance than such desultory alterations was the new system introduced by Alexander for the appointment of Senatorial provincial governors. For a long time it had been the practice to select by lot as many governors as were required in any given year and then to assign to each his individual province[5]. As late as 217 we find a proconsul of Africa "who had gained his province by the lot[6]." Lampridius[7] however states that

[1] Eckhel, III. 508, Marquardt, *l.c.* II. 396.

[2] Orelli, 915.

[3] Renier, 1839 = *C. I. L.* VIII. 7049.

[4] *Digest*, XLV. 1. 1. 6.

[5] Marquardt, *l.c.* p. 569 sqq., *τὴν Ἀφρικὴν κατακληρωσάμενος.*

[6] Dio, LXXVIII. 22.

[7] *Alex. Sev.* XXIII. Provincias proconsulares ex senatus voluntate ordinavit.

provincial governors in Alexander's reign were elected by Senatorial decree, and he is confirmed by the evidence of inscriptions[1] and historians[2]. For a time at least governors were chosen by seniority and in accordance with the five years rule of the *Lex Pompeia*. The practice of election by lot finally disappears with Alexander and the five years rule is for the most part adhered to, though there are cases in which it was subsequently from time to time infringed. Such a return to the old system could only make for efficiency. The acceptance of the praetorship or consulate now definitely involved liability to a provincial governorship and introduced a certain uniformity of administration which had previously been wanting. Men summarily and accidentally called upon to proceed to the provinces were far less likely to prove earnest and effective governors than those whose appointment was long expected and arranged.

In this last matter Alexander exercised considerable prevision for which the provinces owed him some gratitude, but his remaining innovations were trivial or routine in character, with the one exception of the *duces limitanei*, the far-reaching and disastrous results of which even a statesman of the first ability could perhaps hardly have foreseen. It is not on these lesser matters that Alexander should be judged, but on the greater issues. He must be judged rather upon his policy towards the Senate and the army, and his conduct in the great external crisis of his reign. That crisis was the Persian War, and its history remains to be narrated.

[1] Cf. Waddington, *Fastes des Provinces Asiatiques*, I. 263.

[2] Cf. Capit. *Gord. tres*, 2, Ipse post consulatum quem egerat cum Alexandro ad proconsulatum Africae missus est ex senatus consulto. (Borghesi, *Œuvres*, v. 469.)

CHAPTER VII.

THE PERSIAN AND GERMAN WARS.

THE external history of Alexander's reign centres chiefly around the ambitions of the kingdom of Persia. The nations contiguous to the Eastern confines of the Empire had continually been a source of peril and anxiety to Rome, and even in the later period of its history, when those boundaries were defined and securely held, oriental wars of considerable magnitude frequently broke out. Trajan had undertaken a brilliant expedition in which he overcame the degenerate Parthians, and descending the river Tigris from Armenia to the Persian Gulf, reduced the countries of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria. Marcus Aurelius, the unfortunate apostle of peace whose fate made him ever a belligerent, ended by an oriental campaign the period of forty years' tranquillity which followed the conquests of Trajan and the moderation of his successor. Septimius and Caracalla each found their way to the rich and fertile countries of the East and subjugated Osrhoene; and finally Macrinus, becoming involved in war with Ardevan, pusillanimously purchased peace at the price of two million sesterces[1], and celebrated that ignominious victory upon his coins. None

[1] Dio, LXXVIII. 26–7.

of these wars however were of paramount importance. They exceeded in difficulty the other frontier wars of the period by reason of the greater wealth and expanse of the Persian territories, but the real power of that nation had long been dormant. About the time that the Seleucidae had resigned to Rome the country west of Mount Taurus, the Parthians had driven them from the provinces of Upper Asia and had inaugurated a long period of decentralised misrule. The Arsacid princes of Parthia possessed neither the ambitions nor the oriental statesmanship of the great kings of Eran and Turan, which alone could weld the heterogeneous Persian races into an aggressive empire. They were cast in a Greek rather than in a Persian mould; they adopted Greek customs and imbibed the Hellenic influence; they cultivated Greek art and set Greek legends on their coins. And meanwhile they allowed their country to go to ruin under the cruelty and incompetence of independent satraps in small and warring states, better satisfied with the nominal overlordship of a hundred petty monarchs than with the firm command of a single centralised dominion. The turbulence of the satraps was only accentuated by the freedom of the Magi,—the Zoroastrian priesthood,—who gained over the people a theocratic power greater than the influence of the reigning house itself. The entire empire loosely combined, imperfectly administered, ever becoming more and more undisciplined, offered no serious menace to the safety of Rome.

But in the reign of Alexander this was changed. The conquered Persian house, the house which sent forth the expeditions of B.C. 490 and 480 for the subjugation of Europe, the house of dynastic and territorial ambition, had long ceased, but its traditions still lingered in the Priest-dynasty of Darius of Persis which was already established

at the time of Tiberius and which soon developed into a territorial sovereignty. The twelfth in this Priest-dynasty, Ardeshir IV. of Persis, conceived the plan of ousting the Arsacids from their oriental domains and returning to the dominion of Persia as the descendant of the King of Kings. The task of delivering the Persians from their long oppression was successfully essayed in three[1] great battles, by the last of which, at Hormuz, the Arsacid Ardevan was overthrown, and Ardeshir IV. of Persis became Ardeshir I. of Persia, the heir of the King of Kings and of his aspirations. That event, the beginning of a new era in Persian history, took place when Alexander had been four years upon the throne[2].

The return of the house of Ardeshir, the Sassanid, instituted a new epoch in Persian relations with Rome. The battle of Hormuz supplies the key to the anxious words on eastern policy with which Dio brought his history to a close. For a time indeed the danger was a distant one, for the overthrow of Ardevan implied neither the conquest of Parthia nor the subjugation of the outlying Parthian dominions; the sword alone could win the allegiance of the entire empire. Accordingly every province was visited and subdued by the conqueror; those rulers who submitted willingly were treated with consideration, but an obstinate resistance carried with it the penalty of death[3]. Yet the substantial reduction of the empire, which involved the abolition of the satrapies and the re-establishment of a centralised administration, was the work of but few years[4], and only a few opponents

[1] Cf. Zon. XII. 15.

[2] *v.* Clinton, *ad ann.* Agathias, IV. 24, p. 134, Abulpharajius, *Dynast.* p. 80.

[3] Gibbon, ed. Bury, I. 204.

[4] Herod. VI. 2, 7. It was almost completed in 232.

continued their resistance for more than a single campaign. The most formidable of Ardeshir's adversaries were the sons of Ardevan and the relations of his house. Two younger sons remained in Parthia and kept the field for some time, but their overthrow was effected by 230[1]. Another attempted to make good his escape towards Armenia, but his force was cut off and destroyed[2]. That was a timely victory, for even without such reinforcement the king of Armenia, Chosroes, the younger brother of Ardevan, maintained the strongest and most effective resistance. In the early stages of the conquest he had indeed held aloof; probably he did not realise the magnitude of the Arsacid's danger. But after Hormuz he quickly assumed the offensive and in 228 he had inflicted on Ardeshir a serious defeat, driven his invading army from Armenia, and attacked Persia itself, penetrating as far as Ctesiphon, if not to the confines of Arabia[3]. Moreover he had sought for alliances; possibly he had applied to Rome, but the government was not then prepared for interference; with greater success he had won the temporary assistance of the Medes[4]. It was not for some years that Chosroes fell and the Armenian territory was added to the domains of the new Persian House.

But Ardeshir did not await the fall of Chosroes before undertaking the greater enterprise of reclaiming western Asia from Rome. Probably he had but little knowledge of the immense power which Rome could bring against him. The Parthian kings with all their forces were frequently defeated by comparatively small detachments

[1] Schiller, *Ges. d. Rom. Kaiserzeit*, I. 775.
[2] Gibbon, *l.c.*, Moses of Chorene, II. 65–71.
[3] Cf. Zon. XII. 15.
[4] Schiller, *l.c.* I. p. 776.

of the Roman military power, yet from their successive defeats they learnt nothing. Much less could the upstart from Persis comprehend the meaning of the Roman name[1]. Probably he took little trouble to ascertain the strength of his enemy; he was filled with the desire to carry on the work of Xerxes and Darius, and in the recollection of their aspirations he allowed the names of Alexander Magnus and Alexander Severus alike to be forgotten. He remembered that, from Cyrus the first to Darius the last Great King, all the territory as far as Ionia and Caria had been under Persian rule; it was his mission to regain for Persia the entire empire which was its heritage[2]. Consequently in 231, despite the open enmity of Chosroes, Ardeshir felt himself strong enough to undertake a Roman war, and proceeded to secure the great trade routes of Asia along the Tigris and Euphrates. He led this army forthwith into Mesopotamia[3], which at first would fall an easy prey, pressed forward into Syria[4], beleaguered Nisibis and even made his way towards Cappadocia[5]. Alexander was not ready for this display of energy; he had no great general in those parts and the troops were disorganised and utterly unprepared[6]. The success of the first dash across the frontier, always a telling movement in warfare, perhaps exceeded the expectations of the Persian king. Rome for the instant was nonplussed and

[1] Herod. (VI. 2. 5) describes him as *φύσει ὢν ἀλάζων καὶ ταῖς παρ' ἐλπίδας εὐπραγίαις ἐπαιρόμενος.*

[2] Herodian VI. 2. 2. Dio, LXXX. 4, *ἀπειλῶν ἀνακτήσεσθαι πάντα, ὡς καὶ προσήκοντά οἱ ἐκ προγόνων ὅσα ποτὲ οἱ πάλαι Πέρσαι, μέχρι τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς θαλάσσης, ἔσχον.* Cf. Mommsen, *Roman Provinces*, II. p. 87.

[3] Herod. VI. 2. 1, Dio, LXXX. 4, Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVI. 6.

[4] Herod. *l.c.*, Dio, *l.c.*, *Συρίᾳ ἐφεδρεύσας.*

[5] Zon. XII. 15.

[6] Dio, *l.c.*

recourse was not unnaturally had to negotiation. An embassy was sent to the enemy bearing despatches in which it was suggested that discretion was the better part of valour; the Great King was reminded that Rome was a power far different from the small barbarous tribes with which he had as yet contended, and that Augustus, Trajan, Lucius Verus, and Severus had each in turn easily vanquished his predecessors[1]. But Ardeshir was not to be moved by words; according to Herodian his sole reply was to continue the ravaging of Mesopotamia and to besiege the Roman garrisons stationed there[2].

Such an answer was in effect a declaration of war, and without further formalities Alexander began his preparations and set forth from Rome to undertake the campaign in person[3]. As to the history and results of the war which ensued Herodian[4] and Lampridius[5] at first sight are little in accord[6], and it will be convenient first to follow the account of the contemporary Herodian and subsequently to modify his account as far as necessary in view of the remaining evidence; Herodian alone deals at any length with the plan of campaign. According to that authority Alexander was unwilling to embark upon

[1] Herod. vi. 2. 4.

[2] Herod. vi. 2. 5. Zonaras (xii. 15) mentions an embassy sent to Alexander with an imperious reply, but that embassy properly belongs to a later set of negociations.

[3] There were 14 legions stationed in Asia at this time, *v.* Dio, xxiv. 55. But Alexander according to Lamp. drew troops from the other frontiers also for his campaign.

[4] vi. 3. sqq.

[5] *Alex. Sev.* 55 sq.

[6] The accounts of the war are utterly unsatisfactory. Herodian, Zonaras and Syncellus agree for the most part; they probably draw from a common source and their narratives are the best. *v.* Mommsen, *Roman Provinces*, ii. p. 90.

the war and would gladly have remained in Rome, but that the insolence of the enemy and the prayers of his generals in the East induced him to call forth a levy of able-bodied legionaries from Italy and the provinces alike and to prepare for his departure. He marshalled his troops, when all had arrived, in the Campus Martius, addressed them in a warlike speech, and presented them with a donative; next he proceeded to the Senate and announced his departure; then after the due performance of religious rites he left Rome with tears in his eyes amid the good wishes of his sorrowing subjects. The march to the East was speedily effected and Alexander established his head quarters at Antioch, where he drilled his troops and made his final preparations. Still anxious for a peaceful settlement, he again sent envoys to the Great King, but they returned unheard. They were followed by a Persian embassy, consisting of four hundred of the tallest nobles, richly adorned and gorgeously caparisoned, an embodiment of the wealth and resources of Persia. The message of that embassy was sufficient enough: "the Great King, Ardeshir, commands the Romans and their ruler to quit Syria and all Asia over against Europe, and to leave the Persians to rule as far as Ionia and Caria, and all the races between the Pontus and the Aegean; for these are the ancestral possessions of the Persians." Alexander would have replied by executing the ambassadors, but for the violation of international law; as it was, he arrested them, stripped them of their magnificence and quartered them on land in Phrygia, refusing them safe conduct to their homes.

At this point Alexander was confronted by mutiny among his troops[1], but it was quickly suppressed and the

[1] *v.* p. 130.

campaign was pushed forward. The Roman army was held to be equal in numbers to the enemy, and Alexander accordingly apportioned it into three divisions for simultaneous operations on three sides of the Persian dominions, with a view to breaking up the opposing army into several smaller sections for the defence of the various vulnerable points within the theatre of war. The first division was ordered north through Armenia to the country of the Medes. The second division was to operate in southern Mesopotamia. The third, containing the finest and largest body of troops, under the command of the Emperor himself, was detailed for the main attack in northern Mesopotamia. The plan of campaign was probably well conceived; the diversions on the north and south might fairly be calculated to dislocate the enemy's plans and to leave an open road for Alexander. But from the beginning difficulties attended the expedition, for the northern division experienced great privations in its march over rough and rocky country, and when it reached Media and had commenced its depredations, the unwonted activity of the Persian King had already brought up a large force to oppose the advance. No decisive action was however fought, for the rough country, more favourable to the Roman infantry than to the Persian cavalry, precluded Ardeshir from giving battle. Probably the armies stood facing each other, neither of them willing to attack, when the operations of the southern division began to make themselves felt. News was brought to Ardeshir of its advance over the fertile plains and of its impending junction with Alexander, and he found himself compelled to transfer his army with all speed southwards, leaving only so many men in Media as should suffice to hold that easily defensible country against the invader. Ardeshir moved with exceptional

rapidity, while Alexander for some unexplained reason failed to join the southern army. This dilatory behaviour is attributed by Herodian to cowardice or to Mammaea's influence, and he asserts that it was at any rate the cause of a serious reverse. Ardeshir with all his forces threw himself upon the southern division, broke down their gallant resistance, and converted defeat into massacre to such purpose that the entire army, though it fought with the utmost bravery, perished to a man; a profound and ignominious blow, writes Herodian, to the Roman pride and an immense incentive to the Persians for the prosecution of the war.

When news of the defeat reached Alexander at his base, he was ill. Despondency or the ravages of the eastern climate had overcome him. His chagrin knew no bounds and the army was equally enraged at his failure to make the concerted junction and at his abandonment of the legionaries to their fate. Sickness was now ravaging his army, the Illyrians suffering most of all; and despairing of success Alexander ordered a general retirement to Antioch, in which the northern division was ordered to participate. But that force in its retreat suffered even greater losses than in its advance, so that only a mere remnant made good its retirement. The army once more at Antioch was found to be greatly diminished by sickness, cold, and by the sword, but Alexander quickly recovered from his despondency, and silencing the murmurs of his troops by a second donative, prepared for a renewal of the Persian campaign. But no further campaign was undertaken. Ardeshir had also suffered. Both in the north and in the south the Romans had fought hard, and especially in the engagements in Media and the battle in Parthia the casualties inflicted on the Persians had been severe. Persia was compelled to retire once more within

its boundaries and to abandon its schemes of Roman conquest.

These concluding words of Herodian's narrative come as a surprise. Throughout his account he writes as though Alexander's were the losing hand; the Roman strategy is checkmated by the active mobility of Ardeshir; the Roman divisions are cut up; the commander-in-chief is dilatory to an extent almost criminal; the army is compelled to betake itself as best it may to the security of Antioch. And yet the victorious Persians are themselves shown to be almost in the position of the conquered; their losses are enormous, they are unable to take the field in a second campaign, and finally they abandon the projects which originally led them westwards. A narrative so little consistent, considered in connection with the ancient view that Herodian was prejudiced against Alexander[1], rouses suspicion and prepares the reader for a very different official version of the results of the war. What is plainly the official version is embodied in the pages of Lampridius[2], who states that Alexander utterly routed the Great King with his 700 elephants and his 1800 scythed chariots and his thousands of cavalry, and returned to Rome to enjoy a well-earned triumph[3]. Lampridius is aware of the variant account given by Herodian, but he expressly rejects it and quotes "*ex actis senatus*" the speech of Alexander in which with much show of modesty, yet with obvious pride, he announces his victory and the retention of Mesopotamia, with full details of the captures he had

[1] Capit. *Maximin*, XIII. 4.

[2] *Alex. Sev.* LV. 6.

[3] Lampridius adds that many prisoners were taken, but that these were ransomed, part of the ransom money being given to the captors and part being paid into the aerarium. His further statement that this was the first occasion on which Rome had taken Persian prisoners will not require detailed refutation.

effected. Of the other historians the Latin writers are unanimously in agreement with Lampridius, but the Greek writers for the most part follow Herodian, though Zonaras emphasises the losses suffered on both sides, while Zosimus preserves silence on the entire question[1]. As for Alexander himself, he officially described himself as victor on his coins. His triumph is celebrated on a coin of 233 on which the Emperor is seen seated in a triumphal car[2]. Even earlier, in 231, the legend VICTORIA AVGVSTI appears, though it cannot be stated definitely that a legend so frequently adopted by all the Emperors had any specific relation to the war[3]. Most definite of all however is a coin of 233 on which the Emperor is represented standing between two rivers, and crowned by Victory from behind[4]. These rivers are the Tigris and the Euphrates[5], and though the figures are grotesque and ill-cut, the meaning is sufficiently plain. It is scarcely credible that an Emperor so straightforward as Alexander would have thus openly claimed a glorious victory if in reality he had suffered a serious reverse. Inscriptions similarly testify to Alexander's success. In December 232 or January 233 the Greek colony of Antinoe set up statues to Alexander and Mammaea "for his victory and the everlasting security of himself and his house[6]," and the accompanying inscription recording their erection, while it does not necessarily imply a victory already gained, could not have been authorised in the moment of defeat. In Pannonia Julius Caninus erected an altar to Hercules "in honour of the safety and return of the

[1] Cf. Eutrop. VIII. 23, Aurel. Vict. *Caes.* XXIV, Oros. VII. 18. 7, Syncell. I. p. 674.

[2] Eckhel, VII. 273.

[3] Eckhel, *l.c.*

[4] Eckhel, VII. 277, Cohen, VI. 445.

[5] Cf. "Terras interamnanas." Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LVI. 6.

[6] *C. I. G.* 4705.

Emperor Alexander Severus[1]." At Zorava in Palestine an altar was erected "to fortune on account of the safety and victory of our Emperor Aurelius Severus," and though it is a matter for dispute, it is not improbable that Alexander may have been the Emperor honoured[2].

The apparent conflict of Herodian with Lampridius and his followers is not difficult to explain. Herodian was a contemporary who had considerable opportunities for studying the course of the war, and the detailed manner in which he relates its progress, where other historians are content with generalisations, compels the belief that his narrative is genuine[3]. No suspicion need rest on his account of Alexander's strategy. The Emperor without doubt aimed at dividing the enemy's forces by separating his own into three divisions[4], but he was

[1] *C. I. L.* III. 3427 (year 233):

HERCVLI · AVG · S ·
OB · SALVTEM · ET · RE
DITVM · D · N · IMP · S ·
ALEXANDRI · P · F · AVG ·
ET · IVLIAE · MAMEAE ·
AVGVSTAE · MATRIS ·
AVG · N · E · CASTRORVM ·
G · IVL · CANINVS · PRAE · LEG ·
II · A · D · P · F · / / / · SE
verianae EX ·
TRECenaRIO ·
V · s L · M ·
MAXIMO · ET · PATERNO ·
COS ·

[2] *C. I. G.* 4562. The inscription is however referred by many commentators to Commodus.

[3] It is true that Herodian's geography is far from perfect, but he lived in an age when the East was little known to historians of Rome, and when moreover small importance was attached to geographical accuracy.

[4] A comparison of Herodian VI. 6. 6 (*ὡς σχεδὸν ἰσαρίθμου γενομένου τοῦ ἑκατέρωθεν πεσόντος στρατοῦ*) with VI. 5. 2 (*τὴν δὲ τρίτην μοῖραν καὶ γενναιοτάτην τοῦ στρατοῦ αὐτὸς ἔχων*) would make it appear that the north and

outwitted by his more active and warlike opponent, who succeeded in transporting his whole body of troops with sufficient speed to meet and crush two of the divisions in detail. But though the Romans were taken at a disadvantage and obliged to fight against odds, the immense superiority of the individual western soldier over the oriental at this period told its tale, and the small Roman detachments were able to inflict lasting damage on the prestige and the morale of the Persians. Herodian omits to mention that fact until the end of his narrative and prefers to dilate upon the individual performance of Alexander, which certainly seems to have been inglorious; thus far Herodian is misleading[1]. But despite the inactivity of Alexander, Rome did not lose a single inch of territory and Ardeshir in his turn learnt the lesson which so many of his predecessors had also discovered upon the battlefield; he no longer felt strong enough to undertake the conquest of western Asia from the hands of Rome. That is the key to the question. Before Alexander marched on the east, Rome was face to face with a grave problem; a new Persian dynasty, renewing aspirations which had been shattered seven hundred years before, and backed by the strength of a great nation now established on a strong basis of centralisation, had penetrated into Mesopotamia and Syria and was threatening the prestige of the Roman name. The result of Alexander's campaign, however equivocal its anticipatory

south divisions were equal in size but each less strong than the central division under Alexander, which was doubtless first intended to bear the chief brunt of the campaign.

[1] Herodian seems to have used two authorities in his account, the one representing Persia as victorious, the other representing the battle as drawn and casting the blame of Alexander's alleged cowardice on Mammaea: each of these authorities emanated from the opposition and this accounts for the somewhat inimical tone of Herodian's history. Cf. Porrath, *Der Kaiser Alex. Sev.* p. 48.

events, was to drive back Persia within its boundaries, whence it did not again emerge for some years[1]. To a certain extent this result implied victory; the period of territorial expansion had long gone by and no one cast covetous eyes on the dominions of the Sassanids; the establishment of the existing frontiers was the one object to be effected. Yet the victory was a partial one and would only satisfy the biassed minds of the Emperor's Senatorial adherents. In the past, great preparations had been followed, not by the maintenance of the *status quo*, but by long and glorious campaigns on Persian territory, in which Seleucid or Arsacid was reduced to subjection. Alexander's success will not compare with that of his predecessors in the East. The curtain was rising on the last phase of the Roman military power[2].

The date and duration of the war, though in no case correctly stated by the historians of Rome, can be ascertained by other and more valuable evidence. Dio makes no mention of the campaign in his history and

[1] Under Maximin however Mesopotamia fell into the hands of Ardeshir, Syncellus, p. 683. Gordian III. also was engaged in a Persian war. The accession of the Sassanids was the signal for the outbreak of a long series of battles between Rome and Persia. In the end the Emperor Valerian was captured by the Persian arms.

[2] Wahle (*De Imp. Alex. Sev.* p. 38 sqq.) is inclined to adhere more completely than I have done to the version of Herodian and entirely to discount the narrative of Lampridius. Krebs on the other hand (*De Severi Alexandri bello contra Persas gesto*, Düsseldorf, 1847) throws over Herodian and argues for the complete victory of Rome. The truth, I think, lies in the middle view. Herodian and Lampridius are recounting the same episode from their different points of view; Lampridius is anxious to suppress everything that does not increase the reputation of his hero; that Herodian is somewhat prejudiced in the opposite direction appears to be borne out by the fact that he lays so little stress on the disablement of Persia; he is forced by historical truth to admit the fact, but he does so a little grudgingly. Alexander's campaign was not a victorious one but it served the purpose of a victory, and therein lies the justification of the official version on the coins.

it was therefore clearly subsequent to his retirement from Rome in 229. Two years later, in 231, the Fratres Arvales enter on their minutes a prayer "for the safety and return and victory of Alexander[1]," showing that Alexander's march had then begun, while coins of the same year bear the legend PROFECTIO AVG.[2] The inscription of Antinoe testifies to the progress of the war[3], while the inscriptions and coins already referred to as proclaiming Alexander's victory belong to the year 233[4]. Probably the raids of Ardeshir began in 230, but Alexander's expedition only set out from Rome in the following year. It had still to march through Illyria and Thrace, where time would be required for the negotiations and the final preparations. It was in the spring of 232 that the main attack was begun, and considering the distances to be traversed, the fighting could scarcely have been concluded before a late date in that year; moreover the fact that in its retreat the northern division suffered severely from frost makes it clear that the general withdrawal was not ordered until the winter; it would be in the spring of 233 that Alexander found himself safely at Antioch with his troops.

It was not for long however that the Emperor remained in the East. Probably he left his army and returned to Rome as soon as it was evident that the danger had passed, for coins of 233, showing Alexander seated in a triumphal car[5], imply without doubt that he enjoyed his triumph in that year. The triumph was

[1] Henzen, *Acta Arv.* p. ccxvii. iv. 117. III. Kal.

[2] Eckhel, VII. 275; Cohen, IV. 449–51, Alexander, Nos. 486–94.

[3] *C. I. G.* 4705, cited above.

[4] Except *C. I. G.* 4562, which is doubtful. The inscriptions cited are not the only ones having reference to the Persian War. *Eph. Epigr.* v. 612 and 1263 refer to it, but they do not cast any light upon the subject.

[5] Eckhel, VII. 273.

a magnificent affair and Lampridius states that Alexander's car was for the first time drawn by elephants[1]. Subsequently *Ludi Circenses* and *Ludi Scaenici* were held and a donative was granted to the people, while Alexander instituted his foundation for *pueri et puellae Mammaeani et Mammaeanae* in honour of the event. It was not however entirely a time for jubilation. As we have previously seen, the period of the Persian War was also the period of several intestine disturbances, each without doubt of considerable magnitude. Moreover the war in Persia was scarcely ended when a fresh danger arose in Germany[2]. The warlike tribes on those confines of the Empire had crossed the Rhine and the Ister, the boundaries of their territory, and were approaching in battle array the countries contiguous to Italy itself. It was one thing to be confronted by an enemy whose ambitions were limited to the continent of Asia; but the Germans in their barbarian ferocity constituted a more instant and formidable danger[3]. The defeat of Varus

[1] The coins only show horses, and usually the triumphal car was drawn by four white horses (Dio Cass. XLIII. 14. 2, Suet. *Ner.* XXV., Plin. *Paneg.* XXII.). In later times however elephants were used in a "Persicus triumphus" (cf. Capit. *Gord. tres*, XXVII. 9, Quadrigae elephantorum Gordiano decretae sunt, utpote qui Persas vicisset, ut triumpho Persico triumpharet) and the practice may well have been instituted by Alexander.

[2] Germany had recently been so quiet that only four legions were left to guard the Rhine frontier (Legg. VIII. Aug., XXII. Primigen., I. Min., XXX. Ulp. Victrix), and even parts of these had been drawn upon for the Oriental campaigns.

[3] So Herodian VI. 7. 4. Lampridius on the other hand seems to regard the war as a minor one; ea natio quae semper etiam minusculis imperatoribus subiecta videbatur (*Alex. Sev.* LIX. 3). But the preceding sentence refers to the danger as "gravissimum," and his meaning may be that the menace of Germany was all the more galling owing to the comparative ease with which they had been overcome in some past campaigns.

was an ever present nightmare. The third century, almost from its inception, witnessed a series of northern invasions which were the veritable precursors of the downfall of Rome. The Alemanni pressed upon North Italy; the Goths overran Greece and Asia Minor; on the Rhine and Danube, Marcomanni, Carpi, and other tribes were continually aggressive. The years 240, 256, 258, 270, 276, each witnessed wars of the first magnitude between Rome and its assailants, and the reigns of many of the Emperors during this period consisted simply of long and often unavailing struggles on the frontiers. Did we know the whole facts, we should possibly find that the great war which marked the close of Alexander's life was but the culmination of a series of engagements which had proceeded with little interruption throughout his reign, though the fact that they were not serious is plain from the statement of Dio[1], that the legions on the German frontier in Alexander's reign remained at the number of three, to which his predecessor had restricted them.

Herodian writes as if the news of the German outbreak reached Alexander while he was still lingering at Antioch and awaiting the disbandment of the Persian forces. But that view is due to an error in chronology; Herodian places the Persian War late in the reign[2] and is obliged to represent the German expedition as following immediately upon it. In reality there was a peaceful interlude of some eighteen months during which Alex-

[1] xxiv. 55.

[2] In the fourteenth year of the reign (Herod. vi. 2. 1), an error so extraordinary that it is probable that the MS. reading is corrupt: it can be shown from internal evidence that Herodian knew the true date (Wahle, *De Imp. Alex. Sev.* p. 42). Yet on this error Krebs (*l.c.*) bases his argument that the whole history of Herodian is composed "magna negligentia," an obviously unfair conclusion.

ander enjoyed an enhanced popularity[1], and remained quietly at Rome after the celebration of his triumph, until in 234 the alarming report was received from the military commanders in Illyria that the Germans had crossed the Rhine and the Ister, were ravaging the camps and townships upon their banks, devastating Gaul, and preparing for a descent upon Illyria[2]. Alexander's presence with all his troops was imperatively demanded. The legionaries engaged in the Persian War had not yet been dismissed to their permanent stations, and they were forthwith summoned to the north. That summons appears to have been met with considerable dissatisfaction, especially by the Illyrian troops, who had already suffered severely in Armenia and Media; to the charge of inactivity or cowardice in the East the soldiers added that of hesitation or want of confidence in the coming campaign. None the less, leaving only sufficient troops at Antioch to hold the frontiers against further Persian invasion, the main body of the Roman army departed from its quarters in the East and took the road for the North; it was joined

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LIX. 1.

[2] Illyria is mentioned by Herodian, Gaul by Lampridius. There is nothing inherently impossible in the view that the inroad extended south-eastwards, especially as the term Germani is probably used in a loose sense to designate the northern barbarians, but it was Gaul which chiefly suffered, and it was thither that Alexander led his expedition. The insurgent tribes were probably for the most part Alemanni, the composite nation which Caracalla had previously been called on to subdue. There is indeed a difficulty in crediting the invasion of Illyria, inasmuch as the historians make no mention of repressive measures in that quarter, and are agreed that Alexander marched to Gaul, probably to Mogontiacum. (The words in Herodian, VI. 7. 5, *καταλιπών τε δύναμιν ὅσην αὐταρκῆ ᾤετο ῥύεσθαι τὰς Ῥωμαίων ὄχθας* plainly refer to the protection of the Euphrates frontier, not to that of Rome itself.) Yet it may be conjectured that measures were taken to protect Illyria as well as to assume the offensive in Gaul, and that the former operations escaped record on account of the fact that the Emperor was not personally concerned in their conduct.

by the Emperor and his body-guard upon the route[1]. Yet though Alexander made good his progress towards the Rhine[2], the suppression of the German rebellion belongs to the history of the succeeding reign. When face to face with the enemy in the early months of 235, he once more shrank from attack, and strove to tempt the Germans to submission by the offer of a bribe[3]. That weakness, combined it is said with an excessive severity in dealing with some minor insubordination among his men, was fatal to his popularity[4]. The army revolted against its leader's pusillanimity[5], and Alexander fell by the swords of his own legionaries.

The details of Alexander's death are hedged around with a multitude of traditions which obscure the truth. Lampridius records a view, not entirely unfounded, that the growing unpopularity of Mammaea was mainly responsible for the murder[6], but in the account which he himself favours he transports his hero for the purpose of assassination to a place named Sicilia in Britain[7]. Here, while parleying with his rebellious troops, he is said to have been cut down by a few soldiers who compared

[1] The Emperor left Rome in 234.

[2] Cohen, IV. p. 484, Alexander and Mammaea No. 19, year 234: IMP · ALEXANDER &c. PROFECTIO AVG. Eckhel, VII. 277. Cohen *l.c.* No. 16, year 235: IMP · ALEXANDER · PIVS · AVG · IVLIA · MAMAEA · MATR · AVG · P · M · TR · P · XIIII · COS · III · P · P·. A bridge of boats over which Alexander passes preceded by Victory and followed by soldiers, one of whom holds a legionary eagle; in front the river Rhine lying. Cf. Herod. VI. 7. 6.

[3] Herod. VI. 7. 9, Zon. XII. 15.

[4] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LIX. 4, Aur. Vic. *Caes.* XXIV. 3.

[5] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LXIII. 5, Capit. *Maximin*, VII. 5–6.

[6] *Alex. Sev.* LXIII. 5. Cf. Herod. VI. 1. 8, IX. 8. Capit. *Maximin*, VII. 5.

[7] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LIX. 6, In Brittania (ut alii volunt in Gallia), in vico cui nomen est Sicilia.

unfavourably his "excessive severity" with the extravagant liberality which had fallen to their lot under Elagabalus. Alexander had taken luncheon as usual in an open tent and was resting after it, when a German member of his suite entered. The Emperor observed him and asked his business, whereupon the intruder, having no excuse for his entry and alarmed lest it should arouse suspicion, rejoined his friends and urged the Emperor's assassination. Several answered to the call and rushed into the tent; the Emperor's unarmed attendants resisted but momentarily, and the murder was effected without delay[1]. Lampridius adds darkly that some thought this to be the work of Maximin, the assassins being youths who had been entrusted to him to train[2].

In this apocryphal version the reference to Britain[3] probably admits of an easy explanation. The other authorities for the most part agree that the murder took place at Mainz[4]. Near to Mainz stood a "Vicus Britannicus[5]," which may well have been the scene of the murder and from the name of which the confusion with Britain presumably arose[6]. The remainder of the narrative of Lampridius is doubtless inexact except as regards the mention of the name of Maximin. The early history of Maximin is perhaps more picturesque than that of any other Roman Emperor. It was some thirty-two years before the death of Alexander that he first came prominently into notice. "The Emperor Severus returning from an Eastern expedition halted in Thrace to celebrate

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LXI. [2] *Ib.* LIX. 7.

[3] Also mentioned in Aurelius Victor and in Syncell. I. p. 675.

[4] Eutrop. VIII. 2. 3, Cassiod. *Chron.* p. 542 a, 235, Eus. *H. C.* pp. 178–9, a. 2251/233. Also the Chronicle of Jerome based on the canon of Eusebius. Zosimus has a different account.

[5] Schiller, *Ges. de rom. Kaiserzeit*, I. 783.

[6] So Schiller, *l.c.* It is a guess, but a highly plausible one.

with military games the birthday of his younger son, Geta. The country people flocked in crowds to behold their sovereign, and a young barbarian of gigantic stature earnestly solicited, in his rude dialect, that he might be allowed to contend for the prize of wrestling. As the pride of discipline would have been disgraced in the overthrow of a Roman soldier by a Thracian peasant, he was matched with the stoutest followers of the camp, sixteen of whom he successively laid on the ground. His victory was rewarded by some trifling gifts, and a permission to enlist in the troops. The next day the happy barbarian was distinguished above a crowd of recruits, dancing and exulting after the fashion of his country. As soon as he perceived that he had attracted the Emperor's notice, he instantly ran up to his horse, and followed him on foot without the least appearance of fatigue, in a long and rapid career. 'Thracian,' said Severus, 'art thou disposed to wrestle after thy race?' 'Most willingly, Sir,' replied the unwearied youth, and almost in a breath, overthrew seven of the strongest soldiers in the army. A gold collar was the prize of his matchless vigour and activity, and he was immediately appointed to serve in the horse-guards who always attended upon the person of the sovereign[1]."

Under Septimius and Caracalla Maximin served as a centurion, but the death of Caracalla was the signal for his retirement. He refused to acknowledge the usurpation of Macrinus, whose responsibility for his predecessor's murder was generally realised. Elagabalus met the valour and fierceness of the Thracian merely with insult, and he remained in retirement from the unclean atmosphere of the court, though his withdrawal did not involve the abandonment of the Roman military

[1] Gibbon, ed. Bury, I. 169, based on Capit. *Maximin*, II.–III.

career[1]. Alexander on the contrary was quick to recognise the warrior's merits; he elevated the descendant of barbarians to the Senatorial dignity, and commended him to the Senate's admiration[2]. His esteem moreover was more fruitfully evidenced in the appointment of Maximin to the command of the fourth legion composed mainly of recruits; under his vigorous and self-sacrificing discipline, which won alike the affection and the respect of his men, the legion soon became the most efficient in the army[3]. The success of Maximin in this sphere was the signal for his promotion to the chief command[4].

It seems however that these favours only kindled ambition in the breast of the Thracian giant. Emperors were not made in Rome alone, nor did the Principate fall to its most modest suitor. While Alexander was weakly treating with his rebellious troops at Mainz, the proud strong figure of his officer commanded the affection of the soldiers, and Maximin did not disdain to fan the flame of mutiny. The rest is narrated by Herodian in terms which must at least approximate to the truth. The legionaries compared the courage of Maximin with the effeminacy of their Emperor, the military capacity of the one with the other's dilatory inefficiency in Persia. They

[1] Capit. *Maximin*, IV.

[2] According to Capitol. *Maximin*, XIX. 29, Alexander would have given his sister in marriage to Maximin but for his barbarian birth. But the fact that Alexander's sister is nowhere else mentioned casts some doubt upon the whole passage, notwithstanding the fact that it is backed by the citation of a letter of Alexander which is claimed to be genuine.

[3] *Ib.* VI.

[4] In 231 Rutilius Crispinus was chief in command, *C. I. G.* 4483. Maximin's elevation must have been subsequent to the Persian War. The steps in his promotion are not clearly marked. Herodian's account (VI. 8. 1–2) is not more illuminating than that of Capitolinus.

resolved to risk a revolution in so good a cause, and in full meeting in the plain a large body proclaimed Maximin Emperor. At first he expressed a real or feigned reluctance, but quickly yielding to the importunity of his adherents he accepted the proffered office and bade the army consummate its resolution by force of arms. Alexander's quarters were not far distant and the news soon reached his ears; at first in the extremity of alarm he gave way to tears and execrations, but as no violence was yet offered him, he was able the next morning to address his marshalled troops and even appeared to have regained their allegiance. But the old accusations,—avarice, cowardice, and the ascendancy of Mammaea,—were once more sedulously set on foot, and the soldiery soon deserted *en masse*. Maximin's proclamation was now made general and Alexander retired to his tent to await his executioners. Officers despatched by Maximin quickly arrived and the Emperor, together with Mammaea and those of his suite who attempted to protect him, was put to death[1]. In his last moments the unhappy Alexander exhibited a cowardice and want of generosity which accorded ill with his previous career[2].

Thus perished an upright man and a magnanimous Emperor, and the task which had taken him to Germany was left for his successor to accomplish. The reduction of the Germans was a small matter for the vigorous energy of Maximin backed by the forces which Alexander had put into the field. A single campaign ended the barbarian resistance; Germany was ravaged, its cattle driven off, its population decimated and hunted to the inhospitable refuge of its swamps. But in a history of Alexander, one pauses at his death; Maximin, in

[1] Herod. vi. 9. 6–7.

[2] Cf. esp. Aur. Vict. *Epit.* c. 24.

reaping the harvest which Alexander had sown, seems but to aggravate the offence of usurpation. Apart from his cruelties there is indeed something imposing and majestic in this stalwart Emperor, the least Roman of all the Emperors who found their way to Rome. But he lacked the purity and sincerity of his predecessor. If integrity and a blameless life are to be admired in high places, if above all they are to be admired in an age teeming with luxury and ambition and negligent of noble aims, then Alexander deserves our admiration. He united in his character all the moral attributes first looked for in a man, yet most conspicuously lacking among Roman Emperors. But it was a perverse fate that ever raised him to the dignity of the Principate. That office with its history of usurpation and bloodshed, as well as of self-sacrifice and statesmanship, with its unending dangers and its unending temptations, with its constitutional theory and its unconstitutional practice, was in this age a prize only for the great warrior-statesman or for the reckless and self-absorbed *roué*. Augustus had fashioned it into the weapon of beneficent autocracy. Such men as Vespasian and Trajan had found in it the consummation of their ambitions and the means of winning glory for themselves and Rome. Septimius had raised himself through the Principate from the obscurity or disrepute involved in an African parentage to the position of the first soldier in the world; under its banner he had moulded the Roman constitution to his will, and erected a military monarchy whence in his dreams he saw arising the immortality of his house and the renewed ascendancy of Rome throughout the world. And but for his own shortcomings and the graver defects of his sons, who shall say that the dream was beyond accomplishment? On the other hand the madness of a Caligula, a Commodus, an

Elagabalus found in the Principate a means of gratifying its basest passions as perfect as that enjoyed by the Persian King himself; the scale on which the enormities of these Emperors were indulged rouses to this day the astonishment which it was desired to excite. To Elagabalus and to Septimius alike the burden of empire was unknown. The one disdainfully rejected it and sought only the illicit satisfactions ever at his command till his brief day was done. To the other, government was the joy of life; the making of history was his natural occupation; the prosecution of great wars, the administration of a world-empire, was the lightest task to which his proud spirit would descend.

But Alexander was not one of these. He realised the burden of empire as few have realised it, and perhaps in his maturer years he would gladly have exchanged the Palatine for the calm freedom of a meditative life. Praying in his Lararium before the statues of Christ and Orpheus, dabbling in religions which he imperfectly understood, practising in the repose of privacy the moral code of some system of philosophy, courting virtue in an easy path; in such pursuits Alexander was surely working out his true vocation. But as *Princeps Civitatis* he was unfitted for his task; his qualifications were too limited. A high instinctive sense of honour, accentuated by his early training and by the repugnance against vice which Elagabalus had by contrast instilled, implanted in him a stern resolve to fight for the welfare of Rome. He seems to have possessed the power of attracting the upright to his side and of winning the faithful service of his ministers; he shamed the wicked, and by the exercise of an occasional severity kept the impostor at bay and freed his court to a remarkable extent from the abuses and injustice which had long centred round the palace.

He had moreover the courage of his convictions and some power of initiative, while his early popularity which was well maintained gave him a hold upon the Empire never enjoyed by many of the army captains and faction-leaders who had from time to time before him risen to the Principate on the shoulders of a mere section of society. Thus armed, and surrounded by the small *côterie* of advisers whom the sagacity of Mammaea had selected, he fought for his country from the first days of his intellectual maturity.

Therein lies the exceptional nature of Alexander's reign. He was the best man called upon to govern Rome for many a long day after the death of Marcus Aurelius. Not indeed a commanding figure, not a man of unparalleled capacities, wanting even in some of the more essential qualities of statesmanship, he still infused into his actions something akin to romance. Against the grim background of the sordid or melancholy history of predecessors and successors alike, his character is thrown into strong relief. Here was the man who stood firm in a period of decadence, and rebelled against the evils with which society was honeycombed. Here was the man inspired by the earnest enthusiasm of a genuine reformer. Here was the man whose reign had commenced amidst signs of honest welcome and hopes of a revived prosperity, hopes which for a time at least seemed likely to be justified by the event. None will deny to Alexander the honour of good intentions; as a man of honour he stands pre-eminent, though the difficulties with which the political situation teemed outweighed his abilities and denied him the title of preeminence in statesmanship. Elagabalus we abhor; Aurelius we love; Septimius we admire; Alexander we esteem.

The difficulties which confronted Alexander were

indeed enormous. The vicious reign of Elagabalus had implanted in the state a canker which careful legislation and long exercise of virtue could alone eradicate. The policy of Septimius, left without safeguard against the dangers of militarism which it carried in its train,—its evil tendencies uncurbed by his negligent or incompetent successors and aggravated by the licence which the soldiery had ever enjoyed,—bade fair to turn the army into a hotbed of despots, the government into a reign of terror. The new era in the history of Persia raised oriental problems which no Emperor had been previously called upon to solve. The general decline of society, which had passed its zenith, raised a multitude of administrative questions never satisfactorily determined. It was a task beyond Alexander's powers; he must attack each problem in turn, but in none could he permanently win success. In the striking phrase of Mommsen, it was necessary in ancient times to be either hammer or anvil[1],—a phrase almost as applicable to sovereigns as to nations. Alexander was never hammer; in the end he became the anvil. It is true that the moral tone of society was raised for the moment, but it was only for the moment, and with the accession of Maximin the old disorders reappeared. The aggression of Persia demanded Alexander's presence in the field, and national custom and imperial pride alike urged him to the East; yet in the face of the enemy nature denied those qualities which alone could make the Emperor's presence valuable, and the victory which ensued was not without affinity to defeat.

To meet the gravest problem of administration Alexander evolved only his policy of Senatorial revival, which was quickly found to be inadequate to save the state.

[1] Mommsen, *Hist. of Rome*. Eng. trans. III. 193.

The great question of this age, as of almost every age of the later Empire, centred around the army and its aspirations. The inception of the military peril dates back, it may be said, to a period even before Julius Caesar, while Caesar strengthened the foundations of future anarchy by constituting the army a professional class recruited from the provinces, and ready when occasion arose to separate its policy and its associations from those of the Roman people. For some two centuries the ultimate effects of that vast change (effects which could not have been foreseen)[1] were only partially and spasmodically felt, and in the later time when the Dyarchy was endangered, Trajan and Hadrian did much to postpone Rome's evil day by occupying the military ambitions with foreign wars. But the peaceful attitude of the later Antonines, giving the army time to formulate its programme and realise its political importance,—the extravagances of Commodus, pourtraying the real weakness of the Roman world,—and the policy of Septimius, opening up to the eyes of the soldiery a vista of increasing aggrandisement, altered the balance of power in the state. The assumed foundations of the Empire were insecure and the gigantic edifice which the centuries had reared was seen to totter. The auction sale in which the throne was knocked down to Didius Julianus was the symbol and harbinger of the coming *régime* of military anarchy.

Though it will scarcely be admitted by his apologists, the fact is that Septimius had come near to wrecking Rome. Regarded in its most favourable aspect, his policy was no doubt based on a sound conception of the national

[1] Opinions will probably always differ on the question of the real aims of Julius Caesar. Mommsen scouts the idea that he aimed at a military despotism, but ancient opinion is by no means unanimously on his side; cf. esp. Suet. *Jul.* xxvi.

requirements. He was the first great Roman statesman to realise the trend of politics in this period; he saw that the equal division of power made by Augustus no longer existed, that the Emperor was now the predominant partner while the Senate retained nothing but a waning prestige; he was determined to abolish the conception of the Dyarchy, and, accepting the inevitable, to give Rome the only form of government now practicable,—a recognised and established monarchy. To that end he treated the Senate with contempt, and turned to the army to provide the support without which no absolute monarchy is secure. From this point of view, Septimius was a man of insight greater than was Alexander, in so much as he saw that monarchy was the end of Rome. Yet one cannot forget that, while rightly looking to the army for aid, he counteracted the good he might have done by the ill-considered liberality with which he pampered his supporters. The whole history of the Empire showed that the successive Emperors whom fortune had raised to the throne were only too often incapable and weak, and that even a small body of soldiers, if uncontrolled and conscious of its power, could take the world into its hands and throw the Empire into turmoil. Septimius might have known that in teaching the army its power and openly hailing it as the ultimate arbiter of Imperial omnipotence, he was leading it towards autocracy. Yet he allowed the army licence; he pampered it; he left luxury unchecked and rewarded long service with high emoluments. Under his immediate successors the army claimed and obtained a similar licence, and of successive Emperors each in turn met his death on the swords of those who had raised him to the throne. Lax in discipline and accustomed to regard their interest and essence as divergent from the people at large, elevated and idolised

by a great warrior-statesman, the soldiers could now exclaim in their manifold tongues,—"L'État c'est moi."

That proud attitude involved the greatest danger; it was the chief problem which Alexander was called upon to meet. His remedy was half reckless, half supplicatory. He continued the old donatives, at least in some degree. As for the military love of pomp, he contented himself by attempting to divert it into worthier channels, while at the same time, without preliminary negotiations or precautionary measures of support, by altering the working of the constitution without military cooperation, he required the army to moderate its ambitions, to submit to a more rigorous discipline, and to allow the reintroduction of the system of government it had itself overruled. And with it all he possessed neither personality nor machinery which could bring weight to bear upon the men. The army was ready to take upon itself the destinies of the world, and Alexander called upon it to exhibit an insight and to exercise a self-sacrifice which its constitution and its training had effaced, and which he found no practicable means of reviving. He was indeed something of a visionary. He saw the greatness of Augustus and the smooth working of his administrative machinery. He saw the old freedom from faction and the early happiness of the Roman world. "Back to Augustus," must then be his cry. But seeing all this, he did not comprehend the movements of history between the age of Augustus and his own; neither he, nor Mammaea to whom after all the first inception of his policy was largely due, could understand that changes had intervened,—changes of character, changes of association, changes in the balance of power,—making the Dyarchy no longer feasible. Neither did he realise that at best the policy of reaction is a dangerous one, and that the cure of like by like was the true remedy

for Roman ills. The army was now paramount; for good or for evil it must in the end sway Roman politics; not to disregard the army, not to degrade it, but to inspire it with nobler ideals, to instil into it a sense of its mission as well as of its power, to substitute discipline for insubordination, *esprit de corps* for military luxury, to make of it the willing servant of beneficent despotism instead of the selfish agent of anarchy,—that was the path to constitutional security. But Alexander did not understand, and so half-blindly, with enthusiasm tempered by weakness, he trod the path of reaction, only to find the Senate a broken reed and the army the real autocrat of all the world.

But to describe Alexander simply as a visionary would be to exaggerate one side of his nature alone. Ineffectiveness, and even vacillation, must be admitted to have characterised much of his life and work, and these qualities were partly due to his extreme youth; he was not yet twenty when Ulpian was slain at his feet amid his impotent supplications. Partly also they were due to the inevitable feeling of insecurity which even the most reckless Emperor must have experienced in some degree; partly they may be traced to his nationality, for the Syrian of this age possessed none of the impetuous valour of the northern tribes. None the less he suffered as most visionaries suffer. After all government is a business, and the politician who is not a practical man will lack success. An ideal may be seized upon with all the enthusiasm of intense belief, but if the ideal is one belonging to days that are passed and supplanted by another age, all the enthusiasm in the world will fail to kindle a response. A policy may be inspired by the noblest purpose and supported by the soundest logic, but if it rebels against the practical instincts of the nation

required to endorse it, it cannot live. Alexander might justifiy his schemes by an appeal to the sentiment of ancient times, he might support it by all the skill of Ulpian's dialectic and his own philosophy, but his policy belonged to a day that was gone. He courted misunderstanding.

Not only was Alexander's policy inadequate to meet the constitutional necessities; it carried in its train an inevitable defect,—the gradual isolation of the Emperor. He started with a great initial popularity, but his political schemes involved sooner or later the alienation of the military affection, which made it all the more essential that he should acquire the good-will of the remainder of society; while at the same time his social and moral conceptions involved the enmity of at least a portion of the nobility in Rome. Meanwhile his revival of the Senate engaged the favour of the Senators, but it is doubtful whether that favour was of the nature that Alexander valued. The Senate profited, and the Senators would inevitably acclaim the virtue of an Emperor who ennobled them. But at the same time that body had largely, if not entirely, lost its old ambitions. The Senate of the Punic Wars was but a shadowy memory. The idea of a mission was swallowed up in the emphatic desire for personal prominence. While the Senate no doubt gleefully accepted the new honour thrust upon it, there is no evidence, and little probability, that it realised a new duty. Asked to assist in the government, it did not think to abandon its obsequious serenades, to claim the prolongation of the republican magistracies to their original term, or to interfere actively in the Imperial government. As an instrument of administration the Senate was moribund; it might be consulted on a thousand matters over which its legitimate control had long been neglected;

it might offer deferential advice where it had previously been silent; but it could not awaken into administrative activity. In fact it did not give Alexander the support he needed. It accepted the renewal of the Dyarchy because that renewal was offered to it. But it did not justify the offer, and Alexander was left to work the partnership which he had revived. Neither for the most part can the Imperial ministers have understood the Emperor's real aims. Such men as Dio saw chiefly the necessity for disciplining the army; Ulpian added to the idea of military subordination a certain attempt to magnify the Imperial power, at any rate in legal spheres. But the majority of the minor counsellors gave nothing more than superficial advice and the age was almost barren of political acumen. As the years advanced, Alexander must have felt his isolation. "Quintilius Marcellus, than whom history records no better man[1]"; surely if Alexander could have read that judgment, he would have paused to wonder. With the death of Ulpian deep penetration passed from the list of qualities possessed by his advisers; only half-intelligent loyalty remained. He could not turn to his privy council, he could not turn to the Senate, for active support. Still less could he turn for encouragement, as Septimius had turned, to the soldiery. As for the Roman populace, it had subsistence and was satisfied,—cold comfort to an enthusiast. As for the provinces, they were loyal as ever, but they could not assist. Alexander must labour unaided to his end.

Time and again in history isolation has been the lot of a misguided idealism. In a period of dislocation a tyrant finds a thousand ministers, while a reformer, unless his programme be framed to meet the temper of the time, is allowed to languish amid ineffectual applause. Alexander

[1] Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LXVIII. 1.

was such a reformer. His policy did not convince. He stands above the moral and intellectual level of his age, but his splendour is the splendour of isolation. One by one the conquered nations sent their citizens to occupy the Roman throne, until the influx of the barbarians completed the transition to the Rome of medieval times; none sent a man of nobler purpose, yet that noble purpose could not bridge the gulf which separated the Emperor's ideals from his age.

Accordingly his reign is full of contrasts. Everywhere the same industry, everywhere the same sincerity, everywhere, at least at the first glance, the same outward tranquillity. Yet in reality the Emperor's success in each branch of his work was roughly in inverse ratio to its importance, and the outbreak of anarchy on his death was the judgement of time on his reforms. In the more ordinary questions of administration, the government of Italy and the provinces, he had a field for work of lesser magnitude which was admirably performed; there were few difficulties, few imperative innovations; he had but to choose his ministers with care and prudence and to carry on the work which many of his predecessors had well fulfilled. Under him, as under Septimius and Caracalla, the security of the provinces was maintained and improved, especially in the East, whither Alexander's proclivities and the political situation alike particularly led him. Finance was carefully managed in an age when a well-balanced budget involved little hardship for the taxpayer and only extravagance led to pressure of taxation. Industry, morality, religion received a new impetus towards purity and strength. The permanent administration was delivered from the evils which had once beset it. The interests of individuals and the demands of justice were fully considered. These were

the easier questions. The foreign wars were more formidable problems, yet a moderate measure of success was exaggerated into a glorious victory. Most difficult of all was the danger of a military despotism. That danger was thrust into the background by the fiction of a revived Dyarchy. Once more the Senate sat in its renewed nobility and took its share in the deliberations of the Empire. But the outward glory of the resuscitated Senate was periodically broken by spasmodic protests raised by the army, now in a subdued, now in an imperious tone. Beneath the pretentious building was a hidden fire, smouldering for the moment, but unquenched, and soon to break forth and envelope the entire edifice in its devouring embrace. It was the fate of Alexander, not his fault, that he should fail. In the minor departments of state he was able to accomplish much, but his achievement was wrecked by his inability to eradicate an evil too subtle, too deeply rooted to succumb to the attack of any but a master of statecraft. He laboured and he fell, and his work perished with him. But he laboured with sincerity, if without insight, and for a brief moment he revived something of the broken majesty of Rome.

In another age Alexander might have been a successful and famous statesman. Had he succeeded Augustus the whole course of history might have been changed. In that period when the evils of the Empire had not yet borne their poisonous fruit, the amiable figure of a prince uncovetous of personal magnificence, imbued with a love of the ancient grandeur of Rome, and not lacking in the instincts for art and philosophy, could perhaps have carried on the work of Augustus in the spirit in which it was conceived. Controlling the discordant elements of society by a compromise, winning popularity by virtuous patronage of the arts, suppressing the incipient abuses

which gradually arise in courts, and making friends where others found only enemies, he might have at least delayed the troubled times which the Empire had inaugurated. But the lot of the succession was drawn instead in favour of a gloomy man, whose policy and motives were at best misunderstood, and the accident of the succession of Tiberius involved a different fate for Rome. Only in its wider scope can history be regarded as an ordered progress marching surely towards a goal. In a term of years underlying features of character, ingrained tendencies of growth or decline will inevitably leave their mark upon the world. But none the less at any given moment history is the prey of accident;—accidents of inheritance, accidents of nature, accidents of foreign politics for a while sunder the continuity of events. In the early Empire Rome was singularly subject to the changing influences of its successive rulers. Before Julius Caesar its history was determined by a variety of motives and events, controllable at least in some degree by the nation at large. After Caesar, the Romans had surrendered their individualities and placed their fortunes in the hands of a single man. Fortune bestowed Augustus upon Rome and the accident of his genius produced the Dyarchy. Who should follow him? When we survey the reigns of Tiberius, Claudius, Caligula, Nero, Otho, Galba, Vitellius, it is difficult not to admit that the decline of Rome was largely due to an accident of inheritance. Though in society there were elements of decline, though the city had gradually outgrown its constitution, though luxury followed naturally on empire, it was a capricious destiny that ordained government by such men as these. Others of higher capacity and more lofty aspirations might equally have followed in the steps of the first Emperors, and the history of the

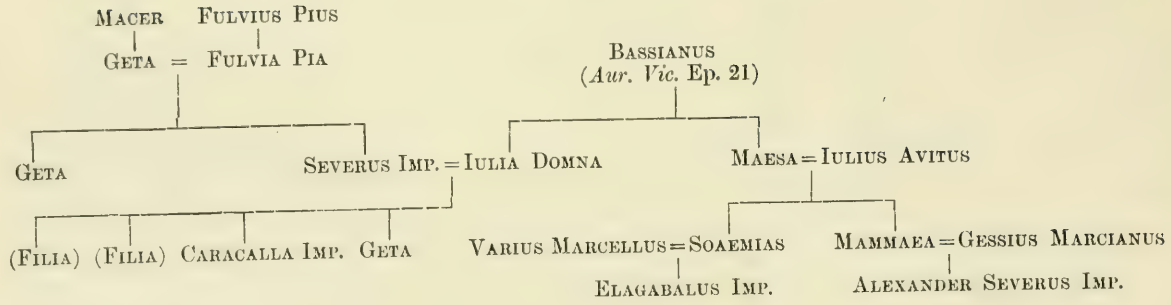
Empire might have lacked pages of folly and distress. But it is useless to speculate. Under a monarchy, be it hereditary, be it elective, fortune places one man of capacity in congenial circumstances, and another in a position he cannot fill. Fortune gave Rome Augustus when Rome needed him, only to rescind impartially that munificence by the gift of Nero, and it was not until the accident of inheritance and popularity had worked for two full centuries almost consistently towards decline, that Alexander's time was come. Then it was too late; the man whose work might have been lasting in a state little beyond its zenith, was unable to under-prop an edifice already crumbling to ruin. The ruin was indeed delayed, but the crash was the greater when it came.

The futility of Alexander's efforts is to be traced only too painfully in the course of subsequent events. Maximin, though not a tyrant of such a kind as superficial criticism and misrepresentation has often painted him, was the antithesis of Alexander. He lived upon the frontiers, he treated the army as the *Populus Romanus*, he freely exercised the methods of cruelty and confiscation which his predecessor had abolished. The Senate was the one order in the state which he utterly ignored. When the exactions which his military improvements necessitated raised a sedition in Africa, the Senate with the energy and rashness of despair espoused the cause of the Senatorial rivals whom the province had nominated; but it was not their inherent strength, but the fickleness of the military allegiance, which compassed Maximin's end. The premature fall of the two Gordians was followed by the Senatorial nomination of Maximus and Balbinus, yet these two only served to rouse first the passing anger of the people, then the lasting hatred of the praetorians. The fall of Maximus and his colleague,—

the work of the praetorians,—was followed by the death of Gordian III and the assassination of Philippus, whose death was the signal for a period of anarchy in which aspirant after aspirant paid the debt of his ambition. In fact the murder of Alexander marked the beginning of an epoch of military despotism, during which the prosperity of the Empire was ruthlessly sacrificed to the soldiery. Emperor after Emperor had sown, and Septimius had called the reapers together. It is difficult to see how any man in Alexander's age, or later, could have avoided the retribution which was hastening to its fulfilment. There was in the state a rotten member which infected the whole body, and that member was predominant. Alexander struggled as it were blindly and perhaps mistook an apparent tranquillity for an actual reformation. In reality that tranquillity was but the calm before the storm; on his death the tempest burst forth with ungovernable fury, and the "Senatsherrschaft" together with the glamour of Republican associations had for ever passed away. "Omnia fui et nihil expedit": if Septimius could speak thus, how much more Alexander!

APPENDIX I.

THE GENEALOGY OF ALEXANDER.



APPENDIX II.

THE DATE OF ALEXANDER'S BIRTH, ACCESSION AND DEATH.

This problem of chronology has exercised the ingenuity of historians and commentators for centuries and is probably beyond the reach of final determination. The materials on which conclusions must be based have been collected for the most part by Clinton in his *Fasti Romani*, but they are distributed over several pages of his tables and are not complete, and his reasoning is difficult to follow. An attempt has been made below to collate the more valuable pieces of evidence and to present them with some sort of classification.

In the first place, from among the number of old lists and chronicles which have come down to us there are two which have direct and important bearing on the chronology of Alexander. The first is the *Stadtchronik*, the list of Caesars in the compilation which Mommsen called the *Chronographen von* 354[1]. The second is the *Liber Generationis*, an anonymous Chronicle in the *Hippolytus Fabricii*, there called *Collectio Chronographica ex anonymo qui sub Alexandro Severo imp. vixit, collectore Gallo quodam Caroli Magni temporibus*, and also in another edition *Chronologi anonymi qui sub Alexandro imp. vixisse A.C.* 236 *dicitur libellus seu Chronicon de divisionibus et generationibus gentium.* Mommsen held that the origins of these two Tables are entirely distinct, representing different traditions and derived from different sources. In oppo-

[1] Published in Vol. I. of the *Chronica Minora* in the *M.H.G.* See also Gibbon, ed. Bury, I. p. 447.

sition to this view Seeck set up a theory that both were alike derived from the Chronicles of Bishop Hippolytus, a contemporary of Alexander, and that their divergences could be reconciled by a drastic process of textual criticism. This theory called forth an abstruse article by Max Rubensohn in *Hermes* (1890), seeking to prove the correctness of Mommsen's view.

It seems fairly clear that Mommsen is right and that while the *Liber Generationis* represents the oldest recension of the Chronicles of Hippolytus and is thus directly derived from reliable contemporary authority, the *Stadtchronik* comes from other less accurate sources, possibly some of the Imperial Biographers who continually flourished. The whole controversy as to the value of the lists is too long for treatment here, but it is assumed that the evidence of the *Liber Generationis* is the more reliable. Between the two testimonies there are serious divergences, as will be seen from the following table of lengths of reigns :—

Emperor	*Stadtchronik*			*Liber Generationis*		
	y.	m.	d.	y.	m.	d.
Severus	17	11	28	14	0	0
Geta	0	10	2	—	—	—
Caracalla	6	2	15	6	9	2
Macrinus	1	4	2	1	2	6
Elagabalus	6	8	18	3	8	28
Alexander	13	8	9	13	0	9

The date of accession of Elagabalus can be ascertained[1] to have been 8 June, 218 ; consequently the evidence of the *Stadtchronik* would place the accession and death of Alexander in 225 and 238 respectively ; or even supposing the six years of the reign of Elagabalus to be a mistake for three[2] the death of Alexander will be carried to 31 Oct. 235, a result which is not borne out by other evidence. On the other hand the more valuable evidence of the *Liber Generationis* gives the date of the accession as 4 March 222, and of the death as 11 March 235. This is more in accord with the

[1] *v. infra.*

[2] There is a similar mistake in one MS. of the *L.G.*, but it disappears later.

testimony of the remaining sources of evidence given below, which clearly show that the *Stadtchronik* is erroneous in its account. The sources are as follows :—

A. Evidence for the date of the death of Elagabalus and of the accession of Alexander. (The events synchronise. Herod. v. *ad fin.* Dio, LXXX. *ad init.* Ἀλέξανδρος...εὐθὺς αὐταρχήσας. Zonaras, P. 1618, XII. 15. Lamp. *Alex. Sev. ad init.* Aurel. Vict. *Caesares* Statimque Aur. Alexandro Augusti potentia delata.)

(1) The death of Elagabalus took place in the year in which he and Alexander were Consuls. This was 222 A.D.

(2) Dio, LXXIX. 3. *ἔτεσι τρισὶ καὶ μησὶν ἐννέα ἡμέραις τε τέτταρσιν, ἐν αἷς ἦρξεν* (sc. Elagabalus) *ὡς ἄν τις ἀπὸ τῆς μάχης, ἐν ᾗ τὸ παντελὲς κράτος ἔσχεν, ἀριθμήσειεν.*

Dio is followed by Zonaras, P. 1618 (Lib. XII. cap. 14). *συγκατεσφάγη δὲ καὶ αὐτῷ* (sc. Elagabalus)*...ἄρξαντι ἔτη τρία ἐπὶ μησὶν ἐννέα ἡμέραις τε τέτταρσιν, ἐξ ὅτου τὸν Μακρῖνον νικήσας ἐν τῇ μάχῃ τῆς αὐταρχίας τετύχηκε.*

(3) Inscription of 222 quoted by Eckhel, VIII. 436. Imp. Caes. M. Aur. Sev. Alex. cos. Eidib. Aprilibus.

(4) A *Canon Paschalis* of Hippolytus at Alexandria, described by Clinton, *Fast. Rom.* I. 237, showing Alexander's reign to be current at 13 April 222. (Cf. Wahle, *De Imp. Alex. Sev.* pp. 11 sqq., and especially Muche, *Forschungen*, &c., where the *Canon* is fully discussed, pp. 12 sqq.)

(5) Euseb. (*Hist. Eccl.* VI. 21). Orosius (VII.) and Cassiodorus, who concur in assigning four years as the length of the reign of Elagabalus.

(6) *Codex Justin.*

(*a*) IX. 1. 3. Imp. Alexander A. Rufo p.p. III. year 222. Non. Februar. Alexandro A. cons.

(*b*) VIII. 45. 6. Imp. Alexander A. Octavio p.p. VIII. year 222. Id. Mart. Alexandro A. cons.

(*c*) VII. 64. 1. Imp. Alexander A. Apollinari et aliis; year 222. p.p. VIII. Kal. April. Alexandro A. cons.

(7) Lamp. *Elagab.* c. 34. Mirum videatur quod haec clades loco principum fuerit, et quidem prope triennio. (Elagabalus.)

(8) Eutrop. *Breviarium* VIII. 22. Is cum Romam venisset biennioque post et octo mensibus occisus est. (Elagabalus.)

(9) Aur. Vict. *Epit.* p. 379. Imperavit biennio et mensibus octo...vixit annos sedecim. (Elagabalus.)

(10) Herod. v. 8. 10. *εἰς ἕκτον ἔτος ἐλάσας τῆς βασιλείας.* (Elagabalus.)

(11) Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* VI. 1 sq. The description of the scene in the Senate at which Alexander is offered the honorific titles of Antoninus and Magnus is stated to be taken from the acta Senatus and dated pridie nonas Martias.

Dio is a reliable historian and his evidence may well receive consideration first. He fixes the date of Elagabalus' death by reference to that of the battle in which Macrinus lost his throne. Now Caracalla was murdered on the 8th April 217 (v. Clinton, *ad annum*), and Macrinus was declared Emperor on the 11th, three days later. The battle took place one year and two months all but three days after his accession, i.e. 8 June, 218[1]. (Dio, LXXVIII. 41, *ἐνιαυτῷ τε γὰρ καὶ δύο μησὶ τριῶν ἡμερῶν (ὥστε καὶ μέχρι τῆς μάχης λογιζομένοις συμβῆναι) δέουσιν ἦρξεν.* Consequently the death of Elagabalus falls, according to Dio (who is followed by Zonaras and Cedrenus), 3 y. 9 m. 4 d. after the 8th June 218, i.e. on the 12th March 222. This nearly accords with the *Liber Generationis.*

There are certain medals of Elagabalus extant, which reckon the fifth year of his *tribunicia potestas.* This seems to carry his reign to a far later date than Dio gives, for in the ordinary course the tribunician power accrues from the date of accession. But Elagabalus was of the same house as Septimius and Caracalla, and he would naturally regard the reign of Macrinus as a usurpation. Gibbon is therefore doubtless right in holding, after Valsecchi, that Elagabalus dated his accession to the principate from the murder of Caracalla. In this way Elagabalus could claim to have entered

[1] Muche (*Forschungen*, &c., p. 13), who is anxious to upset the prevailing theory of the chronology of the period, denies that the battle took place then; he conjectures that Macrinus was murdered on this date and that the battle took place two months earlier. In order to lend colour to his theory he is compelled to take the words *τῇ Ἰουνίου ὀγδόῃ* from their place in Dio VIII. 39 *ad init.* and to put them in the middle of the succeeding chapter,—*ὁ μὲν οὖν Μακρῖνος οὕτω τῇ Ἰουνίου ὀγδόῃ, κ.τ.λ.*, but there is no sufficient reason which would warrant such an arbitrary transposition.

on the fifth year of his *tribunicia potestas* on the 1st Jan. 222. These medals therefore form no serious objection to the evidence of Dio. The two inscriptions quoted above (*Nos.* 3 and 4) show Alexander's reign to be current on the 1st April and the 13th April 222 respectively. They are therefore consistent with Dio's statement, as also are the round numbers of Eusebius, Orosius, and Cassiodorus.

The references in Lampridius (*Elagab.*), Eutropius and Victor (*Epit.*) (*Nos.* 7 to 9) present no difficulty, as the beginning of the reign is reckoned from the arrival of Elagabalus in Rome, which was delayed for about a year from the date of his proclamation. (Cf. Clinton, *ad ann.* 222.)

The statement of Herodian (*No.* 10) is wrong; his chronology is frequently inaccurate. His reference to the sixth year of the reign could only be justified by supposing that he counts from the death of Caracalla (omitting the "usurpation" of Macrinus), and even then it would leave the reign of Elagabalus current till, at the earliest, 9 April 222.

Eutropius (VIII. 22) might have provided a clue, for he states that Elagabalus reigned 2 y. 8 m. after his arrival in Rome. Unfortunately, however, the date of his arrival in Rome is unknown, and it is as likely, or almost as likely, to have been July as May 219. At any rate no definite theory can safely be built up on this reference.

So far then there is nothing inconsistent with Dio's date. But the references from the *Codex* involve a difficulty. The title of the first of the laws, belonging to the year 222, makes the reign current at Feb. 3, and the second makes it current on March 8. Muche (*Forschungen*, &c., p. 17) finds in this a corroboration of his theory that Alexander succeeded in January 222, but in reality the *Codex* was compiled at too late a date to afford any conclusive evidence on the more minute questions of chronology.

It would also seem that some time elapsed after New Year's day 222 before the meeting which led to the death of Elagabalus. (See Lamp. *Elagab.* XV. 5, Denique Kal. Januariis noluit cum consobrino procedere. The ill-feeling thus caused died down, and it was a second and later mutiny that ended in the murder. Lamp. *Elagab.* XVII. 1, Post hoc in eum impetus factus est.)

There is further the reference in Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* VI. A scene in the Senate purporting to be taken *ex actis urbis* and therefore to be official makes the reign of Alexander current at 6 March in a certain year. The scene is one which clearly must have taken place very early in his reign, at a time when popular feeling in his favour was at its height. It therefore seems to me impossible to refer the scene to the year 223 as has sometimes been done[1]. It is more likely that the titles which were the subject of the debate would have been pressed upon Alexander almost immediately on his accession. The official extracts of the Augustan Histories come through Marius Maximus or his continuator and vary in their genuineness. The present one however seems reliable[2] and unless we suppose that the words "pridie nonas Martias" conceal an error, the evidence of Lampridius favours a date late in February or very early in March 222.

The disputed date has thus been brought down within narrow limits. All the evidence tends to show that it was later (probably at least a fortnight later, by reference to Lamp. *Elagab.* XV. 5 and XVII. 1) than the 1st January 222, and it was not later than the 12th March 222. But when greater definiteness is attempted we are met with discrepancies. The *Liber Generationis* says March 4. Dio says March 12. The evidence of Lampridius (*Alex. Sev.* VI.) in my opinion points to about March 1. The evidence of the *Codex* makes the date earlier than Feb. 3. Clinton, ignoring the passage of Lampridius, brings Dio arbitrarily into line with the *Codex*, emending his text from ἔτεσι τρισὶ καὶ μησὶν ἐννέα ἡμέραις τε τέτταρσι to ἔτεσι τρισὶ καὶ μησὶν ἕπτα ἡμέραις τε τέτταρσι καὶ εἰκόσι. This textual emendation would bring the date to 1st Feb. 222, but the conjecture is too sweeping to win credence, especially as any error must have arisen at an early date; for the accuracy of the existing reading is borne out by the extracts made by the annalists.

In these circumstances I am inclined to abandon the evidence of the *Codex* (it is only in the case of a single law that the date must be regarded as incorrect), and to assume an error of a few

[1] E.g. by Tillemont. Cf. Wahle, *l.c.* p. 18.

[2] This view has however been challenged. Cf. Wahle, *l.c.*

days in Dio's computation, leaving the date at March 4, 222, in accordance with the evidence of the *Liber Generationis.*

B. Evidence for the date of Alexander's death.

(The *Liber Generationis* shows March 13, 235.)

(1) Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* LX. 1. Imperavit annis XIII. diebus VIIII.: vixit annis XXVIIII. mensibus III. diebus VII.

(2) Aur. Vict. *Epit.* p. 379. Imperavit annos tredecim: so also Aur. Vict. *Caes.* p. 330, Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* VI. 28, Orosius, Cassiodorus. (Zonaras, P. 1620 c gives *ἡγεμονεύσας ἔτη δέκα*, which is plainly incorrect.)

(3) Eutropius. Tertiodecimo anno et die VIII.: i.e. reign 12 y. 8 d.

(4) Herod. VI. 9, *βασιλεύσαντα ἔτεσι τεσσαρεσκαίδεκα*; so in VII. 1, *βασιλεύσας ἐτῶν τεσσαρεσκαίδεκα.*

(5) Herod. VIII. 3. *ἐς τεσσαρεσκαιδέκατον ἐλάσας τῆς βασιλείας ἔτος.*

(6) Certain Alexandrian coins of Maximin show his reign to be current at 29 Aug. 235. (See Clinton, *ad annum.*)

(7) *C.I.L.* VI. 2001, v. 13 (Sodales Antoniniani), ex s.c.c. (i.e. *ex senatus consulto cooptatus*). Showing that Max. was recognised by the Senate on 25 March 235.

The first five groups of references will only help us provided that we know the date of accession. This must be assumed to be the 4th March 222. From Lampridius (1), whose account coincides with the *Liber Generationis*, we get the date 13th March 235. The statements of Aurelius Victor, Eusebius, Orosius and Cassiodorus (2) support this, but of the references of Herodian (4) two are inconsistent with it; as however Herodian is inconsistent with himself, and on the third occasion on which he states the length of the reign, concurs with Lampridius, this objection is not serious, in view of the weight of the opposing evidence; nor need the difference of a year in the narrative of Eutropius (3) be regarded as other than a slip.

It therefore appears from the evidence of the *Liber Generationis* and Lampridius that Alexander was assassinated on the 13th March 235. This view is not refuted by the Alexandrian coins of Maximin (6) which show Alexander to have been dead by Aug. 29 in that year, nor by the inscription (7) which shows Maximin

to have been coopted by S.C. on March 25 to the Antoninian college.

C. Evidence for the date of Alexander's birth.

So far we have arrived at the conclusion that Alexander succeeded on 4 March 222 and died on 13 March 235. It remains to decide the date of his birth. There are two means of attempting to ascertain this:

(1) by direct evidence;

(2) by reference to the date of death and length of life.

As to his length of life we have only the statement of Lampridius (LX. 1) quoted above. Imperavit annis XIII. diebus VIIII.: vixit annis XXVIIII. mensibus III. diebus VII.

There are a good many passages giving some direct evidence, as follows:—

(1) Natales Caesarum apud Bucherium:—Divi Alexandri Kal. Oct.

(2) Lamp. *Alex. Sev.* V. Eadem die natalem habet hic Mamaeae Alexander, qua ille Magnus excessit.

(Alexander the Great died on the 13th June: the era of the Seleucidae began on the 1st October.)

(3) Herodian, V. 3 (referring to May 218). *ὁ μὲν Βασσιανὸς* (i.e. Elagabalus) *περὶ ἔτη γεγονὼς τεσσαρεσκαίδεκα, ὁ δὲ Ἀλεξιανὸς* (sc. Alexander) *δεκάτου ἔτους ἐπιβεβηκώς.*

(4) Herodian, V. 7. 4 (referring to 221). *πατέρα μὴν ἐκεῖνον* (sc. Elagabalus) *δοκεῖν ἔτη γεγονότα περί που ἑκκαίδεκα, τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον δὲ υἱὸν τοῦ δωδεκάτου ἐπιβαίνοντα.*

(5) Herodian, V. *ad fin.* (referring to March 222). *Ἀλέξανδρον ...κομιδῇ νέον καὶ ὑπὸ τῇ μητρὶ καὶ τῇ μάμμῃ παιδαγωγούμενον.*

(6) Dio, LXXIX. 17. *...ἑαυτὸν δὲ ὡς καὶ πατέρα ἐξαίφνης τηλικούτου παιδίου, ὡς καὶ πολὺ τῇ ἡλικίᾳ αὐτοῦ προέχοντα ἐμακάρισε.* LXXIX. 20. *φωραθεὶς δὲ ἀπεσφάγη* (sc. Elagabalus) *ὀκτωκαίδεκα ἔτη γεγονώς.*

(7) Aurel. Vict. *Caes.* XXIV. Qui quanquam adolescens ingenio supra aevum tamen confestim apparatu magno bellum adversum Xerxem Persarum regem movet.

The first five groups of references form the chief direct authorities for the date of Alexander's birth. Herodian V. 3 shows Elagabalus to have been fourteen and Alexander ten in May 218.

Elagabalus must therefore have been born before May 204, and Alexander before May 208. The passage in Herodian VII. 4, relating to the time of the adoption of Alexander (an unknown date in 221), shows Alexander twelve and Elagabalus *about* sixteen. (περί που ἑκκαίδεκα.) Herodian, v. *ad fin.* describes Alexander as quite young and under his mother's thumb in 222. The presumption therefore is that he was born in 207 or 208.

It remains to settle the exact day in that year on which Alexander was born. The *Natales Caesarum* gives definitely the 1st October. The evidence of Lampridius (2) is at first sight directly in conflict with this; he says that Alexander was born on the birthday of Alexander the Great, which was the 18th June. This divergence however may be regarded in one sense as a confirmation of the evidence of the Catalogue. It is true of course that the story of Lampridius may have arisen from no further foundation than the coincidence of names, but October 1 was the date of the beginning of the era of the Seleucidae, who naturally recall the history of Alexander of Macedon, and granting that Alexander Severus was born on the 1st October, the concurrence of his birthday with the Seleucid era may well have been improved upon by tradition between the date of Alexander and that of Lampridius (who lived under Constantine), until the story told by Lampridius had been evolved.

This interpretation of Lampridius and the notice in the *Natales Caesarum* may be regarded as establishing the 1st October as the birthday of Alexander.

The passages from Dio (*No.* 6) are not sufficiently explicit to be of much service. The passage in LXXIX. 20 agrees with Herodian, v. 3 on the supposition that Elagabalus was killed early in March 222. The passage at LXXIX. 17 shows that Alexander had attained to some considerable age in 221, but that Elagabalus was nevertheless considerably his senior.

The conclusion so far then is that Alexander was born on the 1st Oct. 207 or 208 A.D. But a difficulty at once arises, for if the date is Oct. 1, 208, Herodian, v. 3 (*No.* 3) seems incorrect, and if he was born on Oct. 1, 207, Herodian, VII. 4 (*No.* 4) is equally incorrect, except in so far as the use of που makes the statement indefinite. The age of Alexander seems to be once misrepresented

by a year in either case. However, Herodian is unreliable in regard to chronology and the discrepancy is not surprising.

The direct evidence then tends to the conclusion that Alexander was born on the 1st October 207 or 208, the presumption being in favour of the year 208 on account of the use of the qualifying *που* in Herodian, VII. 4. How far will this tally with the passage in Lampridius, LX. 1? Lampridius informs us that Alexander lived to the age of 29 y. 3 m. 7 d. This would show him (if the date of his death be March 13, 235) to have been born on Dec. 6, 205.

Consequently there is a serious discrepancy in the evidence. The date pointed to by the evidence of Lampridius is Dec. 6, 205. The direct evidence points to Oct. 1, 207 or 208. It remains to decide between these possibilities.

Lampridius when unsupported by statements elsewhere is necessarily unreliable and his evidence may well be erroneous. Clinton has an ingenious theory as to the way in which the error arose. Lampridius states (*Alex. Sev.* I.) that Alexander received the title of Caesar on the death of Macrinus in 218, instead of 221. If, Clinton suggests, Lampridius thought with Herodian that Alexander's age when he received the title was twelve, the error of three years would be accounted for, since if born in Oct. 208 Alexander would be twelve when he became Caesar in 221. The view seems to me too ingenious, but at the same time even without this explanation the evidence of Lampridius may be rejected if it seems inconsistent with the general history.

Elagabalus was born in 204 and it is scarcely conceivable that he would have adopted Alexander had he been only a year and a half older; the act would have been too incongruous. A difference of four years on the other hand is a noticeable one in boyhood and early manhood, and on this assumption the adoption becomes far less grotesque.

The evidence of Aurelius Victor (*Vo.* 7) tends also in the same direction. Alexander is described as "adolescens" when he commenced the Persian War, which was fought late in his reign; as however Aurelius seems to think that the war took place much earlier the value of his evidence is greatly discounted.

There remains the evidence of Herodian. It has been frequently pointed out that he is unreliable in point of chronology,

but on the other hand his evidence of a late date of birth is repeated, and his authority is distinctly of greater weight than that of Lampridius alone. The passages in v. 3 and VII. 4 are not necessarily inconsistent and taken in conjunction certainly point to the year 208, and the reference in Bk. v. *ad fin.* bears this out. Granting the imperious character of Mammaea and the submissive nature of Alexander, the words *κομιδῇ νέον καὶ ὑπὸ τῇ μητρὶ καὶ τῇ μάμμῃ παιδαγωγούμενον* could hardly be applied to a boy of more than thirteen or fourteen.

On the whole the general trend of the evidence, the character of Alexander, and the nature of Mammaea's influence over him must, I think, confirm the theory that Alexander was born in 208 A.D., and the 1st October 208 must therefore be taken as the actual birthday.

It may be added that the tale that Alexander was the son of Caracalla does not conflict with this theory. Caracalla was in Rome at the end of 207 A.D. The Caledonian war which took Septimius and his sons to Britain did not arise until 208[1].

[1] There is a coin of Mammaea from Amasia, Pontus, dated in the autumn of 235, *v.* Eckhel, VII. 283 and II. 343. In view of the stronger evidence of the Egyptian coins, no reliance can be set on this. Eckhel considers that news of the assassination of Alexander and Mammaea had not then reached the Euxine, but it is perhaps more probable that Amasia refused to recognise Maximin, and struck coins of Alexander and Mammaea after their death. A law of Alexander (*Lex II. de offic. praet.*) is quoted by Eckhel and others as dated 13 Aug. 235, but the reading is wrong. It may be added that Borghesi (*Œuvres*, v. 485 and III. 450, French Edition) gives the date of Alexander's death as 18 March 235.

APPENDIX III.

ALEXANDER'S TITLES ON INSCRIPTIONS AND COINS.

Save for *C.I.L.* VI. 1984 where the form Sebero occurs, the variations in the spelling of Alexander's names are confined to the name Aurelius. In this however there is considerable divergence. Rome (*C.I.L.* VI. 1083, 1084, &c.), Latium Vetus (*C.I.L.* XIV. 125, 2293, &c.), the Eastern Provinces, South Italy (*C.I.L.* IX. 789), and Spain (*C.I.L.* II. 1533, &c.) favour the form AVRELLIVS; indeed in the East that form occurs 42 out of 43 times in inscriptions containing the usual formula. Elsewhere the form AVRELIVS is the more common.

The description of Alexander which is most usually affected is Imperator Caesar Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander Pius Felix Augustus, but shorter forms are also common. In the provinces the title dominus noster is not infrequent (e.g. *C.I.L.* V. 1837, VII. 780), but it is chiefly in Spain that the title is found (*C.I.L.* II. 536, 3427, 8173, 10301, 10304, 10984, 13722). Among other terms are Invictus: *C.I.L.* II. 1554, III. 311, &c., V. 1837, XII. 2597. Sanctissimus: *C.I.L.* II. 12519, 13758. Optimus et felicissimus princeps: *C.I.L.* II. 1554. Indulgentissimus princeps: *C.I.L.* III. 8359. Princeps optimus et fortissimus: *C.I.L.* II. 1553. Caelo demissus: *C.I.L.* III. 1675, while in *C.I.L.* VIII. 2467, XII. 144, and elsewhere there is a reference to "tota domus divina," "the whole Imperial House."

Where the name is given at full length it is frequently (in about half the extant inscriptions) followed by a list of offices and titles;

those usually specified are pontifex maximus, tribuniciae potestatis, consul, and pater patriae, and the number of the consulship and tribunician power is usually added. Occasionally consul designatus replaces consul, as in *C.I.L.* x. 6893, pont. max. tr. pot. IIII. cos. des. II. p.p. The only other office mentioned is that of proconsul, and this occurs only infrequently (cf. *C.I.L.* III. 12519, VIII. 9354, 10432, x. 230)[1].

In addition the ancestry of Alexander regularly appears. As already remarked in the main body of the essay, his father is invariably said to be Caracalla, and the usual form of expression is divi Magni Antonini Pii filius, divi Severi Augusti nepos. Occasionally the description is enlarged, as in *C.I.L.* VIII. 4231, Divi Septimi Severi Pii Arabici Adiabenici Parthici maximi nepos, divi Marci Aurelii Antonini Pii Parthici maximi Brittanici maximi Germanici maximi Adiabenici maximi filius.

One of five types of legend is usually found on coins, viz. :

(1) Imp. C. M. Aur. Sev. Alexand. Aug.
(2) Imp. Sev. Alexand. Aug.
(3) Imp. Caes. M. Aur. Sev. Alexander Aug.
(4) Imp. Caes. M. Aurel. Sev. Alexander Pius Felix Aug.
(5) Imp. Alexander Pius Aug.

The terms Pius and Felix are very rare till the year 231; afterwards Pius occurs regularly. But a few coins dated before 231 have both terms: e.g. a coin of 224 bearing legends Imp. Caes. M. Aurel. Sev. Alexander Pius Felix Aug. Liberalitas Aug. II. (Cohen, vol. IV. Alexander, No. 117), and coins of 222, 228 and 229 in which the same legend on the obverse is combined with Liberalitas Augusti, p. m. tr. p. VII. cos. II. p.p., and p. m. tr. p. VIII. cos. III. p.p. respectively (*v.* Eckhel, vol. VII. pp. 268 sqq.).

A certain number of coins also give Alexander's offices on the reverse in one of two forms:—

(1) p. m. tr. p. 1 &c. cos. 1 &c. p.p.
(2) pontif. max. tr. p. 1 &c. cos. 1 &c. p.p.

This fact enables many of the coins to be dated with certainty.

[1] The title proconsul is regularly assumed only by the Emperors of the second and subsequent centuries, and then only when the Emperor is out of Rome. *v.* Mommsen, *Droit Public*, v. 38 and 49. This is so in the case of Alexander; *v.* Mommsen's note in *C.I.L.* III. p. 893.

In the period prior to his accession Alexander is described as Caesar Princ. Iuv. Cos. Des. Pont. (year 221), and as Caesar Princip. Iuv. Cos. Pont. (year 222. Eckhel, VII. p. 268).

The earlier coins are all distinguished by the Star of Elagabalus; it is only late in the reign that this emblem entirely disappears.

It will be observed that the coins and the inscriptions agree in giving the order Severus Alexander, not Alexander Severus. Dio, Herodian and Lampridius designate the Emperor simply Alexander. Aurelius Victor speaks of Aurelius Alexander and of Alexander, Eutropius of Aurelius Alexander. But the (late) title of Lampridius' Life is *Alexander Severus Ælii Lampridii.* Alexander is the regular name in Orosius, Eusebius, and the late ecclesiastical compilations. Historically the correct order is Severus Alexander, but the reverse, Alexander Severus, is hallowed by a long tradition.

APPENDIX IV.

MAMMAEA'S TITLES ON INSCRIPTIONS AND COINS.

The name Mammaea is spelt in various ways on the extant inscriptions. We find MAMEA in Spain (*C.I.L.* II. 3413), in the East (*C.I.L.* III. 798), in South Italy (*C.I.L.* IX. 963), in Latium (*C.I.L.* XIV. 125), in Africa (*C.I.L.* VIII. 1). The form MAMAEA is found in *C.I.L.* III. 3639, X. 7478, and in *C.I.G.* 6000 (Μαμαία). MAMIA occurs in *C.I.L.* XIV. 3037, and MAMMEA probably in *C.I.L.* VII. 222. The form MAMMAEA is found in *C.I.L.* VI. 31373A, II. 3393, *C.I.G.* 4705, &c., and is adopted as the modern spelling.

The name is usually given as Julia Mammaea Augusta; but in two instances Avita is added, viz. *C.I.L.* VI. 31373A Iuliae Avitae Mammaeae Aug. Matri D.N. Imp. Severi Alexandri Pii Felicis (the inscription is much mutilated, but the restoration seems convincing); and *C.I.L.* XI. 3413 (Carthago Nova):—

IVLIAE · AVITAE ·
MAMEAE · AVG ·
MATRI · DOMINI ·
N̄ · SANCTISSIMI ·
IMP · SEVERI · ALE
XANDRI · AVG · ET ·
CASTRORVM · ET ·
SENATVS · ET · PA
TRIAE · ET · VNIVER
SI · GENERIS · HV
MANI · CONVEN
TVS · KARTHAG ·

The Editor of the *C.I.L.* II. incorrectly remarks that this last is the only instance of the name Avita applied to Mammaea.

1. This latter inscription embraces all the titles which are usually applied to Mammaea. It is practically repeated in *C.I.L.* III. 7970 (Iulia · Mamaea · aug · mater · imp · Caes · M · Aurellii · Sev · Alexandri · p · f · aug · et · Castr · et · senatus · et · patr · et · universi · generis · humani).

In other instances only part of the formula occurs; as follows:—

2. *C.I.L.* III. 8360. Mater Imp. Caes. M. Aur. Sev. Alex. P. F. Aug. invicti et castrorum et senatus et patriae.
   C.I.L. VIII. 1406, 1429 and 1484. Mater Aug. et castrorum et senatus et patriae.
3. *C.I.L.* III. 798. Mater sanctissimi Imp. Caes. Sev. Alex. Aug. et castrorum senatusque.
4. *C.I.L.* II. 3393. Mater Imp. Caes. et castrorum.
   C.I.L. IX. 7478. Mater Alex. Aug. et castrorum.
   C.I.L. III. 3427, 7473, 7955, VII. 319. Mater Aug. n̄. et castrorum.
   C.I.L. VIII. 1, 1313. Mater Aug. et castrorum.
   C.I.L. XIV. 125. Mater domini nostri et castrorum.
5. *C.I.L.* IX. 963. Mater Augusti.
   C.I.L. XIV. 3037. Mater Aug. n.
   C.I.L. VIII. 2620. Mater d. n. Aug.
6. *C.I.G.* 4705. Μήτηρ τῶν ἀηττήτων στρατοπέδων.
7. *C.I.L.* VIII. 9355, &c. Iulia Mammaea Augusta (alone).
   C.I.G. 6000. Ἰουλία Μαμαία Σεβαστή (alone).

On coins the name is usually spelt MAMAEA, but MAMMAEA also occurs (Cohen, IV. 490, Mammaea, No. 3). Mammaea's full title on coins is usually Iulia Mamaea Aug. or Iulia Mamaea Augusta, except where her name is conjoined with that of Alexander, in which case the form Iulia Mamaea Aug. Mat. (or Mater) Aug. prevails. On the reverse are found the legends Mater Aug. et castrorum and mater castrorum (Cohen, IV. 494–5) as well as the names of Goddesses in whose form Mammaea is depicted, as Juno, Pietas, Venus Felix, Venus Genetrix, Venus Victrix, Vesta, &c. (Eckhel, VII. p. 288, Cohen, IV. pp. 496–8).

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